

PAGAN AND CHRISTIAN RULE

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PAGAN AND CHRISTIAN RULE

BY

DOM HUGH G. BÉVENOT, O.S.B., B.A.
OF WEINGARTEN ABBEY

WITH A PREFACE BY

HILAIRE BELLOC

6580

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.

55 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK

39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON

TORONTO, BOMBAY, CALCUTTA AND MADRAS

1924

Imprimi potest.

✠ ANSGARIUS, O.S.B.,
Abbas.

WEINGARTEN, 7 Oct., 1924.

Nihil obstat.

FR. INNOCENTIUS APAP, S.Th.M., O.P.,
Censor Deputatus.

Imprimatur.

EDM. CAN. SURMONT,
Vic. Gen.

WESTMONASTERII, die 9 Octobris, 1924.

270
B571

Made in Great Britain

PREFACE.

By HILAIRE BELLOC.

It is sufficiently clear to those who survey Europe in the mass and follow the full outline of their time, that our civilization must return to the Faith or be destroyed.

It is a conclusion arrived at in a hundred ways by observation, by instinct, by history. There stands in support of it the evident formation, insistent throughout the West, of growing intellectual superiority upon the Catholic side: so that to-day no-one is worthy to stand as an equal against the Catholic controversialist save that rare being the pure sceptic. We have to-day against the full and convincing system which Catholicism permanently presents, opponents, who, for the most part, do not know what they are attacking, and, therefore, in their attack can do little more than abuse. The moral and the intellectual tide of the *moment* is clearly with the return of that philosophy which is more than a philosophy; that fulness in which alone the human spirit is at rest and the mind of man finds its home: that living thing which is called the Catholic Church: that Sufficient

Community which at the same time enfranchises, decides, and nourishes.

But this does not mean that our future contains the victory of the Catholic Faith. It means only that when or if the worn filaments of authority still binding non-catholic society together are torn, that tottering bundle will collapse: for so great, so complex, an organism as Christendom can only be bound by organic, and by inter-connected habits and ideas; not by a few reluctantly admitted mechanical rules of property and of law, but by a communion in innumerable sanctities and certitudes. No idea or institution provides such a communion, or offers any organic support to society save one: The Catholic Church.

That the moral and intellectual forces of our time are clearly with the Catholic Church and increasingly so, does not mean that the Catholic Church will triumph. Frequently enough in human history, it is the barbarian that has killed the cultured man; the half-educated, self-assured fool that has obscured to oblivion the ideals and the perceptions of his superiors.

It may be, then, that the inferior forces, the lesser intelligence, what the French call "The Primary Minds," the people nourished on "Universal Histories" and on the mythology of most uncertain guess-work in physics and in pre-history, will triumph at the expense of their betters, and that Europe will cease to be. It would then fall into that barbarism with which it has been threatened four times at least during its recorded history.

There are present to-day the makings of such a catastrophe, and we all see them before us. We can read them in those writings which sell most widely, in the crudities of our demagogues, and in the incapacity of our greatest leaders to take any sufficient hold upon the mass.

The avenues whereby salvation can come to men; whereby the essentials of civilization can be re-introduced to the declining social mind about us; whereby the increasing substitution of affirmation for reason and of hypothesis for knowledge can be checked, are many. One of them, to my mind the most powerful, is the historical: and it is the historical method which is put forward in this book.

It is put forward so clearly that it needs no praise and no criticism of its thesis. I would only suggest this: that our reversion is not to paganism, which we associate with that great antiquity from which we sprang, and upon which the Catholic Church itself is founded, but rather a return by a short cut to savagery.

For though the parallel between our time and that of Theodosius is accurate enough, yet there is all the difference between a rising and a falling tide.

The main argument against the claims of the Catholic Church, an argument which had very great force with our highly cultured ancestors of the eighteenth century, and which still held the ground during the nineteenth, is the argument that Catholicism attended the breakdown of the old civilization in the dark ages, and was native to the insufficient knowledge of the middle

ages ; only as Faith weakened (we are told) did the modern conquests in the sciences appear.

I have called this set of propositions "an argument." It would have been more just to have called them an *attitude*. That was the *attitude* of our fathers. Since all cultural ideas gradually sink slowly down through the social strata, that is the attitude to-day of your popular "best-seller" in what may be called "Railway Bookstall history." It is the normal attitude of the half-educated man, who is to-day the active, as he has always been the potential, poison of society.

The answer to that argument, or rather attitude, is simple enough : the argument or attitude is historically false. The Catholic Church did not cause, nor even assent to, the material decline of civilization after the second century. The whole vigour and spring of the Catholic Church was derived from the very highest moment of antiquity, and it was the preservation of that vigour during the decline of a *non-Catholic* society which saved the world. It was the *conversion to the Faith of a society in peril of death which warded off that death*. It is further true that the fruition of the Catholic spirit led to an achievement, to a multitude and a magnitude in colour, in form, in device, in speculation, in the attaining of intellectual and moral certitude, in law and in all social institutions, which we still precariously enjoy to-day.

Here is the truth which must be rubbed in if we are to change the attitude of our opponent. Especially does primary education suffer every-

where from the anti-Catholic legend. Even they of the Faith, for the most part, take that legend for granted ; especially in countries such as our own where the Catholic culture is known only to very few and where the Catholic tradition has been broken. The Catholics themselves in such circumstances boast of any special Catholic action in any field of learning as though it were an exception to be singled out. They accept the hostile interpretation of the Catholic past which is in the air around them. They measure contemporary national values by the false standards set them, conceiving, for instance, that Prussia is a success and Italy a failure.

The task of reversing that anti-Catholic system is the hardest of all modern tasks. Yet must it be undertaken ; for, although the most profound and the most active agent of change must always be spiritual action upon the individual, yet corporate action upon the mass is essential ; and to-day *history* will act there as nothing else can do. In *history* we must abandon the defensive. We must carry the war into Africa. We must make our opponents understand not only that they are wrong in their philosophy, nor only ill-informed in their judgment of cause and effect, but out of touch with the past : which is ours.

AUTHOR'S NOTE.

I FEEL it would be ungentlemanly on my part to let this small work appear without a word of acknowledgment for kind help received. In the first place, I am indebted to the late Monsignor Henry Parkinson, D.D., first President of the Catholic Social Guild, whose lamented death some weeks ago abruptly closed a life of strenuous activity. He directed my attention to valuable books in the Oscott library on Christian social work during the early Christian period and in the Middle Ages, and took a kind interest in my study. Similarly Dom Anselm Manser, O.S.B., librarian of Beuron Archabbey, assisted me in making good use of his treasure-store. For helpful criticism of the MSS. I have warmly to thank Rev. J. Keane, S.J., Head of Campion Hall, Oxford, as also Rev. C. C. Martindale, S.J., and my brother, Rev. Maurice Bévenot, S.J. The latter also greatly contributed to the prompt publication of the work.

H. G. B.

WEINGARTEN ABBEY,
WÜRTTEMBERG, *July*, 1924.

CONTENTS.

PART I.

PAGAN RULE AT ITS BEST

(in the Augustan Age)

CHAPTER I.

CONCERNING THE OPPORTUNITIES, MEN, AND MEANS AUGUSTUS
DISPOSED OF FOR PERFECTING ROMAN RULE AND RELIGION.

Early years of Octavius Cæsar—Returns from the East after the
murder of his uncle, Julius Cæsar—His relations with Cicero
and Anthony—The Philippics—The end of Cicero and of repub-
licanism—Cicero's *De Officiis*—Moral right and wrong—The
religion of old Rome and Eastern cults—Consciousness of sin—
Lucretius and a transcendent God—Vergil's Fourth Eclogue—
Horace a disappointment I

CHAPTER II.

THE AUGUSTAN PEACE AT ROME.

Octavius the Peace-maker—Policy of conciliation—Slow but steady
increase of his powers—Consul—Imperial powers—Augustus—
Tribunicia potestas—Complete ascendancy over Senate—
Restriction of divorce—*Lex Papia-Poppæa*—Immorality of
Augustus and Cicero, and of other classic writers—Partly due
to slave-blood—Imperial efforts for moral and religious reform 20

CHAPTER III.

THE AUGUSTAN PEACE THROUGHOUT THE EMPIRE.

Expansion of Roman rule in Italy—*Coloniæ*—Age of annexation—
Jus Gentium—*Lex provinciæ*—The new provinces of Augustus—
Success of his imperial policy 28

CHAPTER IV.

AUGUSTUS PONTIFEX MAXIMUS.

Greek and Roman Religion—The moral value of old Roman divini-
ties—Revival of their cults by Augustus—Sibylline and other
oracles—*Ludi Sæculares*—The *Æneid*—Revival of religious
colleges—*Pontifex Maximus*—Ovid's *Fasti*—No appeal made
to sound natural religion—A higher call needed to reform men—
It was to come from the really August One, Jesus Christ . 33

PART II.

PAGAN RULE *VERSUS* CHRISTIAN RULE

(Under Theodosius the Great)

CHAPTER I.

THE TIDE OF THOUGHT AT ROME IN A.D. 350.

	PAGE
Pope Leo XIII. on the social work of the Church—It was first brought to deal with imperial social problems under Constantine—Gradual repression of pagan worship—Reaction under Julian the Apostate—Mithraism and Arianism—Empire of East and West	41

CHAPTER II.

AMBROSE AND GRATIAN (375-383).

Early life of St. Ambrose—He becomes Bishop of Milan—His oratory—The East, defeat at Adrianople—Theodosius in command—Arian persecution checked—The Nicæan Faith reasserted at the First Council of Constantinople—Ambrose active against Arianism and paganism—The Altar of Victory—Revolt of Maximus and murder of Gratian	48
--	----

CHAPTER III.

AMBROSE AND DAMASUS.

Jurisdiction of Pope Damasus—His election—The anti-Pope Ursinus—Rome and Milan—Decretal of Damasus—The deference of St. Ambrose to Rome	58
---	----

CHAPTER IV.

AMBROSE AND THEODOSIUS.

Peace with Maximus—Valentinian II. and the Altar of Victory— <i>Relatio Symmachi</i> — <i>Responsio Ambrosii</i> —Projected Arian basilica— <i>Imperator intra Ecclesiam</i> —Maximus slain by Theodosius—Statue of Victory again—Massacre at Thessalonica—Theodosius acknowledges his guilt—Revolt of Eugenius (392)—His death	64
---	----

CHAPTER V.

SOCIAL REFORM AND CHRISTIAN INSTITUTIONS.

Gospel principles in practical life—The Fathers—The apostolate of the clergy—The <i>De Officiis Ministrorum</i> of St. Ambrose—Pope Siricius and ecclesiastical discipline—The social question—Slaves—The duty of alms-giving—Catholic communism?—Agapes—Action against white slavery—the honour of the poor—The protection of the child unborn, and of the infant after birth—Slavery gradually restricted—Manumission—Redemption	
--	--

of captives—Deaconries and poor relief—Hospitals— <i>Orphanotopia</i> — <i>Brephotropia</i> — <i>Basiliades</i> as technical schools— <i>Geron-tocomia</i> —Ruin of middle class and development of trades and guilds—The rise of the monasteries	73
---	----

PART III.

CHRISTIAN RULE AT ITS BEST

(*The Thirteenth Century*)

CHAPTER I.

SAINT LOUIS AND THE PAPACY.

Importance of the thirteenth century—Childhood of Louis IX.—His first Crusade (1248-1254)—The “age of St. Louis”—Spiritual and temporal power of the papacy—Frederick II. and the “Holy Roman Empire”—Charles of Anjou, King of Sicily—Impartiality and international prestige of St. Louis	91
---	----

CHAPTER II.

SAINT LOUIS AND THE GOVERNANCE OF HIS REALM.

The Crusades and national spirit—Peace in France—Esteem of Louis for the new religious Orders—Conflict at Paris University—Middle Age codes of law—Attitude of Louis towards his clergy—Towards the papacy—Reform of courts of law	97
--	----

CHAPTER III.

LOUIS OF FRANCE AND HENRY OF ENGLAND (1226-1270).

The Normans the link between England and France—Henry III. claims Normandy—The battle of Taillebourg—A just treaty—Louis as international “justice of the peace”—Provisions of Oxford—The <i>Mise</i> of Amiens—Battles of Lewes and Evesham—Dawn of Catholic liberalism	104
--	-----

CHAPTER IV.

EDWARD I. AND LIBERAL GOVERNANCE (1272-1307).

Death of Louis IX., 1270—Accession of Edward I., 1272—Laws to lessen baronial power—Alliance with the people—The Model Parliament—Edward forced to confirm charters—The will of the people	111
--	-----

CHAPTER V.

EDWARD I. AND ROME.

Decline of the papal monarchy—Boniface and Nogaret—“Divine right of kings”—Taxation of clergy—John Peckham—Little tendency to heresy or schism in England—Henry VIII. against Luther—Idea of papacy widening men’s outlook	116
--	-----

CHAPTER VI.

THE CHURCH, THE PEOPLE, AND THE NATIONS.

	PAGE
Guild life in the Middle Ages—Cathedrals—Mystery plays—Honourable position of the workman—Decrease of serfdom—Ransoming of captives—Hospitals—Richard Whittington—Poor-law taxation <i>versus</i> old-time charity—The modern problem—The Minority Report (1909)—International relations—Christendom of the Middle Ages and European peace— <i>De Recuperatione Terræ Sanctæ</i>	122

PART IV.

PAST AND PRESENT.

CHAPTER I.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PRESENT STATE OF CHRISTENDOM.

The victory of Christianity—Study of the centuries—Slowness of evolution of thought and of society—Three pictures of the past—Christianity a failure?—Or to be replaced by modernism?—Causes of imperfect state of Christendom—In general: human frailty—In particular: (a) Remnants of Roman paganism; (b) Teutonic superstitions; (c) influence of Feudalism; (d) statecraft: "Unto Cæsar the things of God"	135
--	-----

CHAPTER II.

THE CHURCH AND THE INDIVIDUAL MIND.

Oppositions of the Catholic and of the modern spirit—Excessive generalisations and unifications—Truth in philosophy—The <i>philosophia perennis</i> —The palm-tree by the waters—Matter, mind, and grace—Undue self-realisation, determinism, and pantheism rejected by the Church—Is conciliation with modern tendencies possible?—The nobler peace conference.	156
--	-----

CHAPTER III.

THE CHURCH AND THE NATIONS.

Training of the moral power in man—Not self-realisation but self-control—The higher good—Divorce—Retrograding towards pagan rule—Comparison of the present with the Age of Theodosius—Schism, free-thought, social morality, birth-control—Motherhood less honoured—Modern slavery—Impending doom—How the Church survived ruin of Roman Empire—St. Gregory's principles—May still save the West—Need of corrective for the individual: self-control and grace—Corrective for the nations can be supplied but by the Church, that <i>de facto</i> is Catholic and world-wide—Mission activity and Rome's knowledge of the wants and aspirations of all nations—Papal correspondence—The future Council—Perfect Christian Rule	161
--	-----

INDEX	175
-----------------	-----

PART I.

PAGAN RULE AT ITS BEST

(in the Augustan Age).

AUGUSTAN CHRONOLOGY.

CIVIL.		RELIGIOUS.	
B.C. 64.	Syria and Cilicia annexed.		
„ 63.	Octavius born.	B.C. 47.	Antipater, Procurator of Judæa. Hyrcanus, High Priest.
„ 48.	Battle of Pharsalia.		
„ 44.	“ Ides of March.” Octavius is recognised by Senate as successor to Julius Cæsar.		
„ 43.	Death of Cicero.	„ 40.	Herod King of Judæa (by Senate decree).
„ 42.	Battle of Philippi.	„ 37.	Herod takes possession of the throne.
„ 36.	<i>Potestas tribunicia</i> obtained by Octavius.	„ 28.	Dedication of Roman Temple to Palatine Apollo.
„ 31.	Battle of Actium.		
„ 30.	Egypt a Roman province.		
„ 27.	Octavius transfers Commonwealth to Roman people; is honoured with title of <i>Augustus</i> .		
„ 27 or 26.	Death of M. Terentius Varro.		
„ 25.	Galatia and Pamphilia Roman provinces.		
„ 19.	Death of Virgil.	„ 19.	<i>Ludi Augustales</i> : at Pergamum, dedication of Temple of Roma and Augustus.
„ 18.	<i>Lex Iulia de Adulteriis</i> .	„ 17.	<i>Ludi Sæculares</i> : Horace: <i>Carmen Sæculare</i> .
„ 12.	AUGUSTUS PONTIFEX	MAXIMUS.	
		B.C. 10.	Augustus inaugurates <i>Ara Romæ et Augusti</i> at Lyons.
		„ 9.	Dedication of <i>Ara pacis Augustæ</i> .
„ 6. (circ.)	BIRTH OF JESUS	CHRIST.	
„ 2.	Augustus <i>Pater Patriæ</i> .	B.C. 4.	Death of Herod: Archelaus.
A.D. 14.	Death of Augustus (August 19th); deification in September.	A.D. 6.	Archelaus expelled from Judæa, which becomes, with Samaria, a Roman procuratorial province. Thus the sceptre “passed from Juda” absolutely.

(The references to Migne denote the Latin Patrology, unless P.G. is appended, signifying the Greek series.)

CHAPTER I.

CONCERNING THE OPPORTUNITIES, MEN, AND MEANS AUGUSTUS DISPOSED OF FOR PER- FECTING ROMAN RULE AND RELIGION.

MAN prides himself of being the lord of creation, of having subjected to his use all things around him, the animate as well as the inanimate. But he has a yet greater power—that of governing himself and his actions by reasoning and reflection. And a still higher and nobler capacity is that of those to whom many men—forming societies, and even nations—turn for guidance to work out their small social aims, or their great national destinies. The art of government, if it be taken in its widest sense of training and guiding men in their intellectual, moral, and social life, may well be called the art of arts. And as this art was brought to a high degree of perfection in Greco-Roman civilisation, and reached a still higher degree in Christian civilisation, it will be no idle task to try to see exactly what pagan rule could and could not achieve in the great Augustan Age, and then compare the achievements of Christianity, and inquire what true Christian rule, if free to act, could still do for mankind to-day.

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The importance of studying the possibilities of the Augustan Age will be realised, once we call to mind the world's modern verdict of Octavius Cæsar and of his

achievements. He can claim to rank "not merely as an astute and successful intriguer, or as an accomplished political actor, but as one of the world's great men, a statesman who conceived and carried through a scheme of political reconstruction which kept the Empire together, secured peace and tranquillity, and preserved civilisation for more than two centuries."¹

Gaius Julius Cæsar Octavianus was born at Rome on September 23rd, in the year 63 B.C. His father was a senator, his mother a sister of Julius Cæsar. This relationship, with the imperial aspirations it naturally suggested, was a determining factor in the career of Octavianus, or Octavius, as he was first called; and this although the national longing for a return to the old-time constitutional government was forcibly brought home to him from his earliest days. Thus the very year of his birth was that of Cicero's consulship, in the course of which he crushed Catilina by his fiery eloquence, and earned the title of *Pater Patriæ* from grateful Rome. Octavius cannot but have been impressed by reports concerning this vindication of the freedom of the Republic, and by the popularity of Cicero with all classes except the nobility, who despised him as a "new man."

At the age of four Octavius was left fatherless, whereupon Julius Cæsar, who had no children of his own, took charge of him, and promoted him to great dignities in early youth. Shortly before the fatal Ides of March he sent Octavius out to Apollonia to study quietly, and also to make himself known to the soldiers by reviewing the legions in Macedonia. The skilful youth was entirely successful in winning their sympathies. Cæsar had made Octavius his heir, and this must have determined the young man's course of action, or at least left him no alternative, when news

¹ Dr. F. H. Pelham in *Encyclop. Britannica*: *Augustus* (XI. ed.).

of his uncle's murder reached the East. From the conspirators Octavius could expect nothing but proscription. Yet, though scarcely nineteen, he was prudent enough not to declare against the Senate and the murderers; but at the same time bold enough to set out for Italy. He had with him all the money Cæsar had sent to Greece for two projected expeditions; he visited the colonies Cæsar had founded in the Campania, and induced two legions to follow him to Rome.¹

Cicero meanwhile had not been remiss in the "slowly dying cause" of the Republic. Two days after Cæsar's murder he made a speech in the Senate in favour of a general amnesty; then, finding that the conspirators had "only removed the despot and left the despotism," he withdrew from Rome and returned to his one solace in evil days: the composition of philosophical works. During the following eight months he compiled (mostly from Greek authors) eight such treatises, the last completed being the *De Officiis*—an important work which we shall examine shortly. It was amid such occupations that Octavius found Cicero engaged, when he paid him a very politic visit at Cumæ. With the great Julius, Cicero had fairly consistently refused to associate actively, though Cæsar had written kindly to him after Pharsalus. Octavius likewise seemed to forget that Cicero had sided with Pompey, and now by his apparent frankness won the heart of the old man. Writing to Atticus on April 19th, Cicero remarks: "Octavius has just come, and is staying at the villa of Philip close by; he is altogether on my side"² And shortly after: "Octavius is with us and shows great esteem for me, and is very friendly. His own followers, indeed, hail him as Cæsar; but Philip

¹ This is the sequence of events as in the fragments of Nicolaus Damascenus, a friend both of Herod and Octavius, found in the Escorial (Duruy).

² "Modo venit Octavius, et quidem in proximam villam Philippi, mihi totus deditus" (*Epist.*, xiv. 11).

does not, so neither will I.”¹ Cicero is quite alive to his own danger, none the less. “When the youth [i.e. Octavius] shall reach Rome, what do you think will happen? Our liberators [Brutus, etc.] will no longer be safe there. Glorious, of course, they will ever be, and happy too in the consciousness of their great achievement; but, unless I am mistaken, we shall be undone.”²

His fears must have been confirmed by a veiled hint from Anthony to abstain from politics: “Although I consider it certain, Cicero, that you have nothing to fear, I think you will prefer to spend your old age quietly and honourably, rather than in the turmoil of politics.”³

It was the irony of things that Anthony should thus address the man who was to launch his great “Philippics” against him within twelve months.

The day after entering Rome Octavius presented himself to the prætor and declared he accepted the heritage and adoption of Cæsar. Then he ascended the rostra and promised to pay all the legacies as left in the will. These we may recall in Shakespeare’s words:—

To every Roman citizen he gives,
To every several man, seventy-five drachmas.
Moreover, he hath left you all his walks,
His private arbours, and new-planted orchards,
On this side Tiber: he hath left them you,
And to your heirs for ever,—common pleasures,
To walk abroad and recreate yourselves.

—*Julius Cæsar*, iii. 2.

¹ “Nobiscum hic perhonorifice & amice Octavius: quem quidem sui Cæsarem salutabant, Philippus non: itaque ne nos quidem.”

² “Quid censes, cum puer Romam venerit [i.e. Octavius], ubi nostri liberatores [i.e. Brutus, etc.] tuti esse non possunt? Qui quidem semper erunt clari; conscientia vere facti sui etiam beati: sed nos, nisi me fallit, iacebimus” (xiv. 12).

³ “Quamquam tuam fortunam, Cicero, ab omni periculo abesse certum habeo; tamen arbitror malle te quietem senectutem & honorificam potius agere, quam sollicitam” (xiv. 13).

Thus young Cæsar conciliated part of the people, and Anthony, soon returning to Rome, found it safest policy to do likewise. After some attacks upon, and raillery of, the imperial claimant, he was prevailed upon by the military tribunes to swear eternal friendship with Octavius. This strengthening of the opposition so startled Brutus that he quitted Italy, in spite of Cicero's entreaties. The latter set out for the East likewise; then changed his mind and, returning to Rome (August 31st), determined to make a last stand for the cause of republicanism. During September he delivered his first "Philippic," and retiring from Rome, wrote the second—this one his masterpiece—"divina Philippica," as Juvenal calls it.¹ With consummate insight Cicero refrained from publishing this manifesto till November, by which time Octavius had well undermined Anthony's authority among the troops. It then burst like a bombshell, and placed Cicero virtually at the head of the Senate. The closing words ring very true: "I have defended the cause of the Commonwealth in my youth, and I shall not desert it in my old age; I contemned the swords of Catiline, and shall not fear yours. . . . Two things alone, Conscript Fathers, do I desire—the one that, when I die, I may leave the Roman people free (nothing greater than this could the immortal gods vouchsafe me!); the other, that every man may so fare according as he has deserved well or ill of the Republic."²

Anthony had retired to Rimini, meditating a second crossing of the Rubicon. Octavius entered Rome on December 9th, having already besought Cicero to take the lead in politics at Rome; this he doubtless did

¹ *Satire*, x. 125.

² "Defendi rem publicam adolescens, non deseram senex: contempsi Catilinæ gladios, non pertimescam tuos. . . . Patres conscripti, duo modo hæc opto, unum, ut moriens populum Romanum liberum relinquam—hoc mihi maius ab dis immortalibus dari nihil potest; alterum, ut ita cuique eveniat, ut de re publica quisque mereatur."

the more readily, as Cicero had spoken sympathetically of him in the "Second Philippic." Yet the great orator could not of course wholly trust Octavius. Writing to Atticus early in November, he says: "On the Kalends letters came for me from Octavian: he is extremely enterprising. He has in mind to go and try to win the other *coloniæ*. This clearly implies war with Anthony. But whom are we to follow? Consider my name and fame, consider my age. And now he asks to meet me and converse secretly either at or near Capua. . . . I urged him to go to Rome, for I think he will have the populace on his side, and—if he is true to the nation—the honest men of mark as well. O Brutus, where art thou?"¹ A few days later he writes: "I get messages from Octavius every day, urging me to throw myself into the cause, to come to Capua, to protect the state once more—nay, to come to Rome at once. . . . He has, indeed, displayed great activity, and does so still; he will come to Rome with a large force,—but he is a mere boy! He thinks he can force the Senate to do his will."²

Cicero was, however, to be himself outwitted by the "mere boy." Though the great orator became supreme at Rome, launching eleven more "Philippics" against Anthony, and compassing his defeat before Modena (April), Octavius took the opportunity to cross the Rubicon himself, and greeted Cicero so coldly in Rome that the latter fled, shortly to meet his end at the hands

¹ "Kal. vesperi litteræ mihi ab Octaviano: magna molitur. . . . Cogitat reliquas colonias obire; plane hoc spectat, ut se duce bellum geratur cum Antonio. . . . Quem autem sequamur? vide nomen, vide ætatem. Atque a me postulat, primum ut clam colloquatur mecum vel Capuæ vel non longe a Capua. . . . Suasi ut Romam pergeret [Octavius]; videtur enim mihi et plebeculam urbanam et, *si fidem fecerit*, etiam bonos viros secum habiturus. O Brute, ubi es?" (xvi. 8).

² "Ab Octavio quotidie litteræ, ut negotium susciperem, Capuam venire, iterum rem publicam servarem, Romam utique statim. . . . Is tamen egit sane strenue & agit; Romam veniet cum manu magna, sed est plane puer! putat senatum statim (a se cogi posse)" (xvi. 11).

of Anthony's soldiery, before the close of the year (December 7th, 43). Octavius, it is said, really did strive long to prevent his proscription.

Cicero's "Philippics" may well be termed the "swan song" not only of the great orator, but also of the old-time republicanism he championed. We have already referred to it as a "slowly dying cause," and, indeed, in face of the centralisation of world-power in Roman hands (definitely achieved through the defeat of Anthony at Actium twelve years later, September, 31 B.C.), such homely rule as that of the Comitia and tribunes became hopelessly inadequate. Augustus had the genius to cope with the situation; but, as we shall see, he ignored too completely Cicero's appeal for Roman liberties, however dramatically it had forced itself upon him.

Cicero, despite the political activities of his last two years, had given amazing proof of his power of intellect by partly translating from the Greek and partly composing no less than eight philosophical treatises, thus completing a series of works that were profoundly to influence education in the West, and by their general advocacy of Stoicism and its lofty conceptions, to pave the way to some little extent for men's acceptance of Christianity. The best substance of Pagan morality was here reproduced, forming a fund of sane teaching Octavius might well have employed to further his moral reforms.

The last of these works, the *De Officiis*, being a most masterly treatise on man's duties and dignity, may well arrest our attention. In the very last letter of Cicero, quoted above, we read: "I worked out in two books the treatise of Paneatius on 'Duties,' though it is written in three books. For the author starts by making three divisions of duty and right action—the first discussing whether an action is right or wrong; the second, whether useful or useless; the third dealing

with the cases when what is right appears to clash with what is expedient or useful, as, for instance, in the case of Regulus (for whom it was expedient to stay, but strictly honest and just on his part to return and give himself over to the enemy). The author discussed the first two classes, promising to go into the third. But this he never did. Posidonius, however, took up the subject, and I procured his book. . . . As to the title, I am pretty sure that καθήκον is best translated 'duty,' unless you know of a better term; the full title of my book is 'On Duties.'"¹ Thus could the great man still concentrate himself on philosophy at a time when Octavius was already calling on him to take the lead at Rome. At the opening of Book III. he remarks: "Now that the Senate is suppressed and our anticipations have come to nothing, how could we honourably fill any public office in curia or forum? . . . I have written more during the short time the Republic has been suppressed, than during many years when it was flourishing.—But, my dear son Cicero, although every field of philosophy is rich and valuable, none bears more abundant fruit than the part that treats of duties, from which principles are drawn for honest and manly conduct in life."² He then proceeds to solve

¹ "τὰ περὶ τοῦ καθήκοντος," quatenus Panætius, absolvi duobus (libris); illius tres sunt, sed cum initio divisisset ita, tria genera exquirendi officii esse unum, cum deliberemus, honestum an turpe sit, alterum, utile an inutile, tertium, cum hæc inter se pugnare videantur, quo modo iudicandum sit (qualis causa Reguli, redire honestum, manere utile), de duobus primis præclare disseruit, de tertio pollicetur se deinceps, sed nihil scripsit. Eum locum Posidonius persecutus est; ego autem & eius librum arcessivi. . . . Quod de inscriptione quæris, non dubito quin 'καθήκον' officium sit, nisi quid tu aliud, sed inscriptio plenior: *De Officiis*."

² "Extincto senatu deletisque iudiciis, quid est quod dignum nobis aut in curia aut in foro agere possimus? . . . Plura brevi tempore eversa, quam multis annis stante republica, scripsimus. Sed cum tota philosophia, (fili) mi Cicero, frugifera & fructuosa . . . sit, tum nullus feracior in ea locus est nec uberior, quam de Officiis, a quibus constanter honesteque vivendi præcepta ducuntur."

cases where honesty and expediency seem to clash by applying the Stoic formula: "Whatever is honest is expedient too, nor is anything expedient, unless it be honest." ¹

From the very outset of the work the dignity of man is well brought out: "Nature brings men together amicably through their reasoning faculty to converse with one another and to live together. Nature awakens first in man a particular love for his children; then makes him wish men should hold assemblies and celebrations, and wish to take part in them, and so prompts him to acquire what is needful for food and clothing, not for himself alone, but for his wife, children, and others who are dear to him, and whom he must protect. . . . The inquisition of truth, however, is man's quite especial task. . . . And it is by no light ordinance of nature and reason, that of all living beings man alone has a feeling for order and propriety, and can observe due measure in his words and actions." ²

He then proceeds to study the "honestum," as exercised by the four cardinal virtues. And here there is no servile copying of the Greek writings he worked upon, for illustrations of virtues and vices are copiously drawn from Roman history. Speaking of the danger of a man becoming guilty of injustice when desire for dominion (*imperatorum cupiditas*) is aroused, Cicero has at once the bold illustration: "The rashness of C. Cæsar has made this clear, for he overthrew all laws,

¹ Quidquid sit honestum, idem esse utile;

Nec utile quidquam, quod non sit honestum.

² "Natura vi rationis hominem conciliat homini & ad orationis et ad vitæ societatem; ingeratque in primis præcipuum quemdam amorem in eos qui procreati sunt; impellitque ut hominum cœtus & celebrationes & esse & a se obiri velit, ob easque causas studeat parare ea quæ suppedient & ad cultum & ad victum, nec sibi soli, sed conjugi, liberis, ceterisque, quos caros habeat tuerique debeat. . . . Imprimisque hominis est propria veri inquisitio atque investigatio. . . . Nec vero illa parva vis naturæ est rationisque, quod unum hoc animal sentit, quid sit ordo, quid sit quod deceat, in factis dictisque quis modus" (i. 4).

human and divine, to gain the imperial position of his dreams.”¹ Right is unhesitatingly to be preferred to expediency, and as a whole this work of Cicero “is the best practical treatise on the whole duty of man which pagan antiquity affords.”² “Cicero,” the same writer continues, “has given life to the figure of virtue, and clothed it in warm flesh and blood.”

There was, therefore, in Greek *thought* a great power for raising the Roman above the material world, whose every delicacy he was learning to enjoy, now that treasures of every kind were pouring in to the capital of an empire “greater than had been.” Platonic and even Stoic morality were, however, to prove wholly inadequate to stem the tide of corruption and vicious religious observances flowing in from the eastern shores of the Mediterranean, now definitely under Roman sway. Other moral forces were judiciously set to work to the same end by Octavius Augustus; jointly with philosophy they may have partly stayed the evil for a time, but the wholesale corruption in the next century (especially under Tiberius and Nero) makes the superficial character of this bettering but too clear.

Distinct from the voice of conscience that Cicero sought to train men to heed, the human will, fashioned for love even as the heart, needs some ideal of power and beauty that o’erleaps the little ends for which man daily, yearly toils. In himself and in the phenomena of climate and autumn fruitfulness he failed not to discern in every land signs of some powers benignant, and honoured these under innumerable titles. The Roman of this day, however, was growing up into materialism out of the sense of mystery that had ennobled his ancestors. Their religion was indeed idola-

¹ “Declaravit id modo temeritas C. Cæsaris, qui omnia jura divina atque humana pervertit propter eum, quem sibi ipse opinionis errore finxerat, principatum” (i. 8).

² Forsyth, *Life of Cicero*, ii. 284.

trous, but it had been honest and sincere in its way, and the recognition that absolute power resided ultimately with Saturn (or later Jupiter) was most likely a remnant of monotheism that had its value. The brilliant deities of the East now tended also to make the old-time divinities seem flat and stale, while the medley of rites witnessed in Rome during the last two centuries B.C., tended to ruin what was left of true natural religion.

Of the spiritual craving for renovation in the pagan world there is direct evidence in the writings of the Stoics, and in the Greek papyri. We hear Cleanthes lamenting: "The wicked go astray, each after his own devices," and later we hear Seneca speaking of the sense of sin: "Conceive in this vast city, where without cease a crowd pours through the broadest streets . . . this city that consumes the grain of all lands—what a solitude and desolation there would be if nothing were left save what a severe judge could absolve of fault! We have all sinned (*peccavimus omnes*), some more gravely, others more lightly, some from purpose, others by chance impulse, or else carried away by wickedness external to them" (*De Clementia*, i. 6).

In the papyri we find appeals to the gods and expressions of complete dejection, as the following: ". . . again I asked Serapis and Isis, saying, 'Come to me, goddess of the gods, show thyself merciful, hear me, have pity on the Twins. Me and my grey hairs thou hast absolved, but I know that in a . . . time I shall have rest. But these are women, if they are defiled, they shall never at all be pure'" (date, 160 B.C. "Dream from the Serapeum," *Paris Papyri*, 51; cf. Milligan, *Greek Papyri*, 1910, pp. 20-21).

In a letter of condolence in bereavement, we read: ". . . I grieved and wept over the blessed one. . . . But truly there is nothing anyone can do in the face of such things. Do you therefore comfort one

another. . . ." (*Pap. Oxyr.*, 115, 2nd cent. A.D.; Milligan, *Greek Papyri*, 1910, p. 96).

Contrast with this 1 Thess. iv. 14-18: "We would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that are asleep, that you be not sorrowful even *as others that have no hope*. . . . We shall be always with the Lord. Wherefore comfort ye one another with these words."

As Professor Deissmann¹ rightly observes, the study of individual character and mentality in the world of antiquity through the help of the papyri will reveal how much Christianity could bring to meet the needs of these souls. Ever clearer will the full meaning of St. Paul's vision be brought out: he saw a Macedonian standing, and beseeching him and saying, "Pass over into Macedonia and help us" (Acts xvi. 9).

Augustus, however, had nothing of the supernatural religion that thrilled Paul through and through. Even the monotheism of Plato and of Aristotle had been forgotten by the later Greek schools (the Academy and the Neoplatonists). The effort Augustus made to restore a saner mentality among his subjects was consequently narrowly circumscribed by utter paganism; it proved all too soon a failure.—The first step he took was to revive the memories of Rome's glorious past, and paint with ideal touch the bounties of the gods for Italy. These Cicero has indeed recalled in many of his works, but nearly always with a tinge of scepticism, and never had he sought to synthetise them into one forceful picture. It was in such a task that the Muse, vouchsafed to Vergil, was to assist Augustus nobly. But here again, as we shall see, Octavius narrowed down in poetry, as in ritual and statecraft, all things to strengthen his own supremacy. And the people, with their dimmed consciences, lent themselves

¹ Deissmann, *Licht vom Osten*, p. 255 (4th ed., wholly rewritten, 1923, Mohr, Tübingen).

all too readily to the glorification, even beyond the limits due to mortal man, of him who in the beauty of his perfect physique and in the keenness and power of his intellect, established peace for the war-wearied world.

That Vergil might have otherwise written a yet greater poem than the *Æneid* two considerations render at least probable. In the first place, his immediate precursor in style and to some extent in matter (especially if we consider the *Georgics*) was Lucretius. This poet, we may note, died the very day Vergil was born, and in view of their kindred spirit, some good Neo-Pythagorean fastened on this fact as a patent instance of the transmigration of souls. With his keen appreciation of the beauties of Nature, Epicurean as he was, Lucretius shakes himself quite free from the superstitious worship of all manner of earthly and inter-stellar divinities, and rises to the conception of a transcendant God. Witness lines like the following (and see Munro's notes thereto) :—

There appears the Deity and its blissful resting-place,
Which neither winds surge against nor the clouds
With rain besprinkle, nor does the snow, falling thick
And white, sully that region, where the ether
Is never clouded, but radiates its friendly light
Far and wide.

Nor is there any reason why you should believe,
God has a resting-place in any part of the world ;
For the nature of the gods is subtle, and far removed
From our senses ; indeed it is scarce perceived
By the soul's intellect.¹

¹ Apparet Divum numen, sedesque quietæ :
Quas neque concutiant venti, neque nubila nimbi
Adspargunt, neque nix acri concreta pruina
Cana cadens violat ; semperque innubilis æther
Integit, & large diffuso lumine ridet.

—*De Rerum Natura*, iii. 18.

Illud item non est ut possis credere, sedes
Esse Deum sanctas in mundi partibus ullis :
Tenuis enim natura Deum, longeque remota
Sensibus a nostris, animi vix mente videtur.

—*Ibid.*, v. 148.

Here a strict distinction is drawn between the Divinity and Nature in terms that Vergil has failed to express. Lucretius admittedly overshot the mark by denying creation and the ruling of a Providence, but the exalted and subtle nature of the Divinity as here expressed might under more favourable circumstances, we maintain, have forcibly struck Vergil's refined soul and made him sing of things yet higher than fair Iris or Venus, mother of a man, and the complacency of the gods in imperialism on earth.

That this is no mere assumption on our part is further apparent from the famous *Fourth Eclogue* of our poet. It has been hailed as Messianic from the Church's early days, and has secured to Vergil a second immortality as bosom-friend of Dante. Few subjects in literature have so puzzled till to-day the minds alike of the erudite, the religious, and the irreligious. It will suffice for us to adduce Professor Ramsay's view as expressed in two recent articles.¹ "In these he strongly supports Professor Conway's argument as to the spread of Messianic ideas in Italy during the latter half of the first century B.C., and also agrees with J. B. Mayor in tracing these ideas to a Jewish source, which he has no hesitation in identifying with the prophecies of Isaiah himself" (cf. also notes to pages 35, 38).

The decidedly elevating factor in Vergil's poetry could in any case only appeal to the most educated. For the plain man about his daily duties and pleasures, some one was needed to point out his foibles with merry sarcasm, and encourage the Roman, already over-effeminate, to uprightness, self-respect, and honest dealing. But there was no man well-fitted for the task. The ideal of civilisation was that of Greece,

¹ Quoted from preface to *Virgil's Messianic Eclogue*, 1907, by Mayor, etc. The articles referred to appeared in the *Expositor*, June and August, 1907.

namely, the attainment of grace in behaviour and polish and wittiness in conversation, which to the Roman could not become second nature as it did to the delicately gifted Greek. And the loss was greater than the gain, for the sterling qualities of honesty and simple living were now gone, leaving the man with blunted conscience, and giving his best work a character of artificiality.

There was none to go seek out the poor and the fatherless and tell them that theirs is the kingdom of heaven. There was not even a Socrates, a man with grave and kindly eyes, ready to mix with all classes and set men thinking of higher things by his deep questioning. As popular moralist, there was none but Horace, able indeed at times to sing of the strength to battle through life possessed by him who is upright and pure :—

Integer vitæ scelerisque purus.

—*Odes*, i. 22.

or, again, just and steady of principle :—

Iustum et tenacem propositi virum.

—*Odes*, iii. 3.

Still, the poet's words rarely carry conviction, as owing to reasons adduced above, on very few occasions is he really in earnest. This is the more to be deplored as his ancestry was of apparently honest, though lowly, Italian stock, and the rare glimpses we do get of his genial soul make one conceive that with more judicious patronage and guidance the poet-laureate of Augustus might have used his great talent to far nobler purpose. Superficial satirist as he was, had he been directed by Augustus to model himself upon M. Terentius Varro (whom Octavius had shielded from proscription when Cicero was doomed), their common footing on the field of satire could have led Horace to more substantial work for the benefit of at least the genteel society he

frequented. One is grieved to find passages like the following in his *Satires* :—

“ Almighty Jove, who giv’st and tak’st away
 The pains we mortals suffer, hear me pray ! ”
 (So cries the mother of a child whose cold,
 Or ague rather, now is five months old).
 “ Cure my poor boy, and he shall stand all bare
 In Tiber, on thy fast, in morning air.”
 So if by chance or treatment the attack
 Should pass away, the wretch will bring it back,
 And give the child his death : ’tis madness clear ;
 But what produced it ? *Superstitious fear.*

—*Satires*, Bk. II., Sat. 3. Conington’s transl., verses 288-294.

Literally *fear of the gods* (*timore deorum*). Horace himself felt (or at least says he felt) induced to offer sacrifice when a bolt fell one day from the blue ; but most likely he took the writing of the graceful ode (Bk. I., *Od.* 34), describing the event more seriously than the resolve to become a devout worshipper of the gods.

From the Stoic school much could have been expected, had there been anyone to continue Cicero’s work of popularising their tenets in the West, and in such a way that they should not be sicklied o’er with the pale cast of sceptical academic thought or a vague pantheism. But faith in polytheism was tottering where it had not already lapsed, the many were wholly materialists, except for their trust in magic, and the minds of few availed to rise above their motley deities to pure monotheism. The monotheism of Socrates and Plato had been blurred out of all recognition by the Neo-Platonists ; while Aristotle’s high conceptions of the Deity had partly been lost with so many of his writings, and what remained had been honourably buried by the various academies.

It is consequently clear that the general reform of the individual citizen and of the state, after the stress and strain of the civil war, could not be based by

Augustus on deep religious convictions. But, as the following chapters go to show, he appealed as eloquently to the religious sense of the Romans and of his other subjects as he could; while making so many sound enactments as soldier, statesman, and empire-builder that his reign is rightly called the "Augustan Age."¹

¹ Our appreciation of Horace in these pages is less favourable than that, for instance, of Professor A. V. Campbell (*Horace, A New Interpretation*, Methuen, 1924), but a careful study of the moral and poetic element in Horace, Vergil, Catullus and Juvenal left us no option. Tennyson's opinion of this poet of the superficial Alexandrian school was no higher. If Horace wrote satire, it was because it came natural to him and was to a great extent in the family (cf. *Sat.* I. IV.). He can hardly have meant to figure prominently in the reform movement, for he tells us in the same satire that his writings are not on sale in the book-stalls; indeed, he only reads his satires in private to select friends. The vicious, we fear, will never be converted by Horace; but the upright will admittedly often benefit greatly from his shrewd good sense.

CHAPTER II.

THE AUGUSTAN PEACE AT ROME.

"THE temple of Janus, which ever since Rome was built had been closed but once or twice before the days of Octavius, Augustus closed thrice in a much shorter interval of time, having secured peace throughout the Empire on land and sea."¹ These words of Suetonius² bring out as well as any what a master hand now held the sceptre of Rome. The energy and resourcefulness Octavius had displayed in acquiring it were abated not a whit when the imperial crown rested on his brow. He laboured ever *firstly* to render his dynasty more secure, and, *secondly*, for the nobler aim of consolidating the Empire and promoting the weal of the Roman people: "He was assiduous in investigating and pronouncing upon legal causes, working even into the night. If he chanced to be unwell, he had a couch set up as tribunal, or even dealt with the cases at home from his bed. His decisions were not only most carefully reflected upon, but also extremely lenient."³ Such a prince

¹ "Janum Quirinum, semel atque iterum a condita Urbe memoriam ante suam clausum, in multo brevioris temporis spatio, terra marique pace parta, ter clusit."

² *Octavius*, c. 22. Suetonius (*circ.* 70-140) was *Magister Epistolarum* at Rome under Hadrian. He used good sources (notably Terentius Varro's notes), but also a little court gossip, for his *History of the Twelve Cæsars*.

³ "Ipse ius dixit assidue, & in noctem nonnunquam; si parum corpore valeret, lectica pro tribunali collocata, vel etiam domi cubans. Dixit autem ius non diligentia modo summa, sed & lenitate" (*ibid.*, 33).

could not fail to conciliate the minds of most men, particularly as his rise to absolute power was in most of the steps so deft and cautious as to avoid direct reproach of infringing Roman rights. Though really supreme after Actium, in 31 B.C., and holding a triple triumph in 29, Octavius was but a consul till 27. "Then he resigned his extraordinary powers and transferred the Commonwealth to the Roman people," as he is careful to record himself on his "*Monumentum Ancyranum*." Imperial powers, by the passing of a law, were then conferred upon him *for ten years*, and he received the title AUGUSTUS. This imperial authority was subsequently renewed every five or ten years as long as Augustus lived. He was also granted the *tribunicia potestas*, a privilege so important and significant of the trend of politics as to call for more than a passing word. It will bring out what dominion Augustus obtained in Rome, *the city*; while the subsequent investigation of Rome's relations to the colonies will further show the degree of wisdom with which imperial law was dispensed "*Urbi & Orbi*."

If we examine the Roman constitution in the last pre-Christian centuries, the key to much of its evolution and decay will be found to centre round the *tribunes*, the people's representatives. On the aristocratic side of the constitution we have, in descending order of dignity, the CONSUL, his representative the PRÆTOR, and the CENSOR, as chancellor of the Exchequer, with QUÆSTORS in attendance. These were elected by the five classes of "settled" citizens, divided according to wealth and district (*curia*), and voting in centuries. The landless men, *proletarii*, had no representation till the first "Secession" (494 B.C.), when they obtained two TRIBUNES (later increased to five and then ten), seconded by two ÆDILES. Though tribunes gradually rose to occupy the consulship, the Senate remained on the whole aristocratic till the days of the Gracchi.

Senate and people then measured their forces. The great tribune Tiberius Gracchus was done to death, but his brother Caius was able to take up his policy, bring relief to the poor, work for the establishment of an industrious middle-class of husbandmen, and strengthen the power of the *Equites* (higher middle-class citizens) at the expense of the Senate. He thus became strong enough to launch his colonial scheme, which formed a landmark in the development of Roman influence. Later the tribunate declined in power, "since ambitious men no longer sought support among the people, but from the armies. Still, it could furnish right to him who had only might, for it represented the national sovereignty."¹

Augustus had been consul year after year till 23 B.C. Then he resigned the consulship after a serious illness, and gave evidence of great respect for the old republican spirit. In return grateful Rome conferred the tribunitian power upon him for life. Gradually, without any offensive innovation, Augustus became in effect all-powerful. "He was neither king nor dictator, but only prince of the Senate, imperator of the army, tribune in the Forum, and proconsul in the provinces."² All who were inclined to display strength of character as against the will of the Cæsar, somehow disappeared from the public scene. This made for peace, but it also reft the Romans of their liberty, and left of the republican government but a phantom. This is the great defect that underlies all the Augustan power and glory, but it is doubtful whether the Roman Empire would have attained such peace and prosperity under a normal constitution. The *manner* in which Augustus used his powers are their justification.

The number of ædiles was, indeed, increased, but for the main police functions new officers were appointed,

¹ Victor Duruy, *History of Rome*, iv., p. 80.

² *Ibid.*, p. 81.

the *Præfectus Urbis* and the *Præfectus vigilum*, the former of whom was to rise rapidly. We can now appreciate Suetonius's statement : " He had the power of tribune vested in himself for life, but occasionally nominated a colleague to the office for a five-year period. Powers for enforcing the laws and ensuring the observance of public morality were also vested in Octavius for life ; and though he had not the dignity of Censor, he three times made a census of the people, the first and third time in conjunction with his colleague, but the second time on his own authority only." ¹

Over nobles and senators his ascendancy was also paramount. Augustus had begun by proscribing and doing to death all who had raised a hand against his uncle Julius, whereby he cannot be said to have given the death-blow to the true republican spirit, which was already defunct some twenty years. In effect, the state was rid thereby of noblemen the most ambitious and unruly, and so proximately prepared to enjoy days of peace. Tacitus remarks rather sarcastically in the beginning of his *Annals* (i. 2-4) : " He attracted the soldiery to himself by gifts, the common people by his supplies of corn, and all by the charm of peaceful days. Gradually he grew mightier, and arrogated to himself the duties and rights of senators and magistrates. This he did without opposition, for the men of strong initiative had fallen either in battle or through proscription. The other nobles received gifts and honours in proportion to their servility. . . . Only the empty *names* of state officials remained ; the younger generation was born after Actium, and even most of the elderly men had been born during the civil war ; scarce

¹ " Tribuniciam potestatem perpetuam recepit : in qua semel atque iterum per singula lustra collegam sibi cooptavit. Recepit & morum legumque regimen æque perpetuum ; quo iure, quamquam sine censuræ honore, census tamen populi ter egit ; primum ac tertium cum collega, medium solus " (*ibid.*, 27).

any were left who had seen the days of the (true old) Republic. Thus was the state revolutionised, and nothing remained of the honesty and integrity of old." ¹

The reduction of the Senate to powerlessness is well described by Suetonius (*Octavius*, 35): "Octavius restored to its quondam dignity and number the motley and unmannerly crowd of senators (cf. Cicero's rhetorical remark, 'extincto senatu' quoted on p. 7), and this he did by two elections—the first made at their own choice, each senator having one vote; the second series of nominations he made with Agrippa (his trusty companion and colleague from student days). On this occasion Augustus is thought to have worn a breastplate beneath his apparel and a dagger at his belt.

"After they had been chosen and sanctioned, he decreed that before any senator took his seat, he should make supplication with incense and wine at the altar of the god in whose temple-courts the meeting was being held, also that a formal legislative sitting of the Senate be held *not more than twice a month*. He would adjourn verdicts of serious cases as he pleased, heedless of custom and due order of sequence. So that more might share in the public administration (and thereby the influence of the individual be reduced), he invented new offices of state. He was also very insistent, whenever returned consul, that *two* colleagues be given him instead of one; but he did not have his way, for there was a general protest that his majesty was quite sufficiently diminished by having as much as one sharer in his consulship. He also had ten

¹ "Militem donis, populum annona, cunctos dulcedine otii pellexit, insurgere paulatim, munia senatus magistratuum legum in se trahere, nullo adversante, cum ferocissimi per acies aut proscriptione cecidissent, ceteri nobilium, quanto quis servitio promptior, opibus & honoribus extollerentur. . . . Eadem magistratuum vocabula; iuniores post Actiacam victoriam, etiam senes plerique inter bella civium nati: quotusquisque reliquus qui rem publicam vidisset? Igitur verso civitatis statu nihil usquam prisci & integri moris, etc."

officials given him by the Senate to bring out the manner of life of each of the *Equites*."

" Besides this, he thought it most important to keep the people pure and free from admixture of foreign and servile blood ; he was very sparing in granting Roman citizenship, and restricted manumission. . . . He also tried to provoke a return to the manner of dress of former times."¹ Thus, though not truly free, the Roman was now led to an increase of self-respect and appreciation of his privileges. On the other hand, the omnipotent one cannot have been altogether insincere when stating in an edict : " Be it granted me to establish the state so safe and sound on its own broad basis . . . that I may be called the one who made it perfect." And he often made similar statements.²

To improve morals he had recourse to legislation. He restricted divorce and attached fines to marriages between the classes. In this last case, however, " because of lively opposition, he was unable to pass the bill through until some of the penalties had been lessened

¹ " Senatorum affluentem numerum deformi & incondita turba . . . ad modum pristinum & splendorem redegit duabus lectionibus : prima, ipsorum arbitrato, qua vir virum legit ; secunda, suo & Agrippæ [his trusty companion and colleague from student days] ; quo tempore existimatur lorica sub veste munitus ferroque cinctus præsedisse. . . . Quo autem lecti probatique & religiosius & minore molestia senatoria munera fungerentur, sanxit ut, priusquam consideret quisque, thure ac mero supplicaret apud aram eius Dei, in cuius templo coiretur ; & *ne plus quam bis* in mense legitimus senatus ageretur. . . . Sententias de maiore negotio, non more aut ordine, sed *prout libuisset* perrogabat. Quoque *plures* partem administrandæ republicæ caperent, nova officia excogitavit. Exegit etiam ut quoties consulatus sibi daretur, *binos* pro singulis collegas haberet : nec obtinuit, reclamantibus cunctis, satis maiestatem eius imminui, quod honorem eum non solus, sed cum altero, gereret. Impetratisque a senatu decem adiutoribus, unumquemque equitum rationem vitæ reddere cœgit " (35, 37, 39).

" Magni præterea existimans, sincerum atque ab omni colluvione peregrini ac servilis sanguinis incorruptum servare populum, & civitatem Romanam [i.e. citizenship] parcissime dedit, & manumittendi modum terminavit. . . . Etiam habitum vestitumque pristinum reducere studuit " (40).

² " Ita mihi salvam ac sospitem rempublicam sistere in sua sede liceat . . . ut optimi status auctor dicar " (*Suet.*, *ibid.*, 28).

or cancelled.”¹ Adultery, he enacted, would put the guilty man at the mercy of the outraged family ; while a woman convicted of the crime could no longer marry a free man. This latter law was far in advance of our modern legislation. The final outcome of his efforts was the *lex Papia-Poppæa* (passed about A.D. 9). These laws, Montesquieu remarks, “include so wide a range of subjects (marriage, divorce, dowry, inheritances, etc.), that they form the finest part of the civil law of the Romans.”²

But in this all was not gold. Some degree of concubinage was tolerated and legislated for, and Octavius himself was unscrupulous on this score, in so far as the one means of discovering his nobles’ secrets. Cicero’s life had been of comparatively high standing in this respect ; but even he deferred to the immoral wishes of Cato, and did not discountenance a moderate laxism in the *De Officiis*. And since he holds notwithstanding that all our actions are to be *rationi obtemperantes*, we cannot but see here an inconsistency that points to a distinct vitiation of the intellect. And for such a state of mentality what hope was there of reform ? If Rome’s best-gifted moralists were so minded, who could avail to touch the conscience of the masses ? Vergil might sing, forsooth, of the dignity of widowhood, embraced for life by a matron after her first husband’s death, and give point to his moral by telling of Dido’s fate. Horace might take the hint from Augustus and sing in his *Carmen Sæculare*—

Faith, Honour, ancient Modesty,
And Peace and Virtue, spite of scorn,
Dare to return to earth. . . .³

¹ “Præ tumultu recusantium perferre non potuit, nisi ademptâ demum lenitâve parte poenarum.”

² Montesquieu, *Esprit des Lois*, xxiii. 21.

³ Iam fides & Pax & Honos Pudorque
Priscus & neglecta redire Virtus
Audet . . . ;

The damning fact remained that Horace, Vergil, and the very ministers enjoining the reforms, lived and died unmarried. And if then and later a good number of the chief literary men did marry, in compliance with imperial law, they remained childless many a one ; among them being Ovid, Lucan, Statius, Silius Italicus, the two Plinies, Suetonius, and even Seneca and Tacitus.

Through immorality Rome was being conquered by those she had triumphed over. Slaves had been pouring into Italy from every point of the compass, and degraded, and were degraded by, their masters. Gradually they had been set free in great number to replenish the ranks of the citizens fallen in battle, and had brought licence into every walk of life. Hence by his restriction of manumission as well as by legislation on morals, Augustus was working, with all energy and to the limits of his moral insight, to render Roman life healthy once more. It was partly, doubtless, for this too that he resolved to make the strongest appeal to the Roman's patriotic and religious instinct, now long dormant, and this he did by reviving religious rites and religious bodies, and by bidding his poets sing of the brave days of old.

CHAPTER III.

THE AUGUSTAN PEACE THROUGHOUT THE EMPIRE.

“ Augustus Cæsar, Divi genus, aurea condet
Sæcula qui rursus Latio regnata per arva
Saturno quondam ; super et Garamantas & Indos
Proferet imperium.”

—*Æneid*, vi. 792-794.¹

THE energy of Rome, that brought low beneath her eagles each Italian tribe successively, and then each nation settled within a compass of a thousand miles, was not merely due to greed of conquest or of gold. In the wake of the military followed in most instances, sooner or later, the man of law and order, having in view, not indeed the happiness of the conquered, but the general stability and profit of the Empire, in which all had some share.

While expanding through Italy, Roman power was steadied by the planting of *coloniæ*, equivalent to fortresses, consisting usually of some 300 Roman citizens and of many thousand Latins. About ten such were founded before 245 B.C. The Punic wars checked the expansion, and the following group was only created between 191 and 157, to the number of seventeen communities. The next step was to plant Romans *outside Italy*, a project first conceived, as far as we know,

¹ “ Augustus Cæsar, offspring of the gods, will restore the golden age in Latium, through those lands where Saturn reigned of old, and shall extend his empire over Garamantes and Indians.”

by Caius Gracchus, to whom the reader has already been introduced. This project was, however, much thwarted from the outset, so that by the time of Julius Cæsar only two extra-Italian colonies had been founded, at Narbonne and Ivrea. Likewise only two "Gracchan colonies" (to relieve the poverty of citizens) were sanctioned by the Senate. To assist still poorer classes, Marius and Julius Cæsar developed schemes of colonisation. Finally, for the veterans who had fought in the civil wars and as late as the Battle of Philippi, asylums had to be found. They were settled mostly in Italian towns. Twice did Augustus thus provide for the soldiers in twenty-eight such settlements (in 28 and 14 B.C.), and the inhabitants expelled for the purpose were sent to colonise Dyrrachium and Philippi. But many veterans he also sent overseas to distant colonies to serve as *propugnacula Imperii*. The Emperor Claudius was to act similarly on this principle of self-defence in settling Romans at Cologne and Colchester.¹ Thus was something of Roman civilisation brought to the very frontiers of the Empire.

During the hundred years preceding the accession of Augustus, the Roman state had been annexing ever more and more provinces—ever since the year 146 B.C., which saw the ruin of both Corinth and Carthage. As the Roman world grew larger, the outlook of the Roman legist also became broader. The very presence of so many strangers in Italy led to the gradual elaboration of a *Jus Gentium*; while the governors of provinces were naturally brought into touch with institutions wholly new to them, and when back in Rome not a few were able to make valuable additions to Roman law itself.

The provinces themselves were mostly administered

¹ Cf. Dr. J. S. Reid, *Roman Public Antiquities*, p. 387 (in Sandys' *Companion to Latin Studies*, 1910).

under a *lex provinciæ*, drawn up by delegates of the Senate sent to each province for the purpose. Consequently, by the time of Augustus, the legists had an unprecedented knowledge of practical administration. Till then the provinces had undeniably been badly governed, as the many laws passed against extortion and as Cicero's speeches and letters prove. Now, however, the genius of Augustus as an empire-builder was to manifest itself, and make the true Roman feeling for law and order and fair play find its noblest realisation.

The Emperor himself added ten provinces, and gave Rome her northern frontier on the Danube; then (after 10 B.C.) set himself to the task of assimilating what was held, rather than of conquering still more. Seventeen years before he had divided the provinces into public, imperial, and procuratorial. The first, older and richer (e.g. Asia, Sicily, Africa), were governed by ex-consuls and ex-prætors, chosen by the Senate; the second were ruled by men of the same rank chosen by the emperor, and styled *legati*. In these newer provinces the presence of legions was imperative. Over the third class the Emperor appointed procurators or prefects. The provinces one and all were governed by Romans, and had to submit to taxation. For administrative purposes the larger provinces were often divided into *dioceses* or *conventus*.

Among the many causes of the rapid improvement of the colonies we may note the direct responsibility of most governors to the emperor; the impossibility of bribery being resorted to in cases of maladministration, as the Emperor tried the cases (or at least was present in court) himself; the fixing of the governor's salary; the improvement of communications (road-building and imperial post), which brought provincial news quickly and regularly to Rome; as also the actual journeys of Augustus through the provinces. Further, the good

government of the imperial provinces reacted upon the senatorial ones, and there was a general levelling up.¹

Thus it came about, through the great-minded, if utilitarian, policy of Augustus, that the rough ways were made plain from the sands of Arabia to the columns of Hercules and to the shores of Britain, so that all flesh might see the salvation of the Lord. Thus it came to pass that the whole system of taxation was reorganised, and to this effect "there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus that the whole world should be enrolled" (Luke ii. 1). This is warranted by Suetonius, who tells us that at his death Augustus left to Tiberius a *breviarium totius imperii*, a compendious description, with statistics, of the whole Empire (*Augustus*, 101); and Tacitus records that Tiberius had the compilation read aloud to the senators, and that "it contained the public sources of wealth, the number of Roman citizens and allies under arms, the number of fleets, kingdoms, and provinces, the tributes and taxes, the necessary expenses and money grants."²

The Empire did not concede the right of self-government to the provinces, there being not the least regard for the feelings or the "rights of man" of the conquered races, *except* in so far as was expedient to obtain fairly willing service; but this exception proved a saving clause. "Provincial councils" were now instituted in nearly every province, consisting of *representatives from all parts thereof*, meeting annually. Their primary function was to pay religious honours to the Emperor and celebrate games in his honour. But they could also deliberate on provincial affairs and make representations to governor or emperor, and even

¹ J. S. Reid, *Roman Public Antiquities*, pp. 395-400; cf. Suetonius, *Octavius*, 47.

² "Opes publicæ continebantur, quantum civium sociorumque in armis, quot classes, regna, provinciæ, tributa aut vectigalia, aut necessitates ac largitiones" (*Annals*, Bk. I., chap. ii.).

prosecute a governor at Rome (and this mostly successfully).¹

Concessions such as these, backed by the substantial pledge of stability and order, reconciled most of the conquered races to their lot. In the imperial agents, as a whole, courage, justice, devotion to their work can hardly be denied, while to the great overlord of them all something of genius must be conceded. The whole system was nevertheless but a piece of utilitarian machinery. It had, indeed, the priceless effect of holding the Empire together and of rendering its immense eastern frontier from the Elbe to Arabia an impregnable rampart to the barbarians for three long centuries, till the gospel of Christ had so leavened this Empire, that when the latter fell, Christianity was able to react with equal efficacy upon the new tide of paganism, and win all Europe for Christ. Under Augustus the world was indeed "Romanised"; it was made to feel the greatness of Rome's name, but also made to feel there was in the conqueror no vestige of sympathy for the conquered. The system was, therefore, not even humanly perfect. The nearest approach to touching the hearts of men was through an appeal to religion and religious awe, by combining with the worship of local deities that of the gods of Rome and of the deified Emperor. The attempt was significant of the times, and *politically* it was to enjoy some success; but as a factor for *moral reform* it failed, as the following chapter will help to make clear.

¹ Pontius Pilate, governor of Judea, some twenty years after Augustus died, had many a good reason for fearing to displease the people. In the end he was, in fact, (in A.D. 36) deposed for maladministration.

CHAPTER IV.

AUGUSTUS PONTIFEX MAXIMUS.

Cæsar's arma canant alii, nos Cæsar's aras,
Et quoscumque sacris addidit ille dies.¹

—Ovid, *Fasti*, i. 13, 14.

WE do not purpose to trace back the religion of Rome to its fountainhead in the East. It will suffice for us to note two facts, in order that we may appreciate the manner in which Augustus Cæsar sought to turn religion to account. Firstly, there were still Romans who had a very vague conception, but yet a conception, that their *Jupiter optimus maximus* might be the supreme or the one real god, and a less vague conception that souls might be immortal. These principles were doubtless derived from the great Arian family beliefs; but the religious thought of the old Roman habitually centred round his agriculture and Saturn (most likely a sower-god or a seed-god).

Brilliant Greek mythology had soon found its way into the modest Roman pantheon *via* the Greek colonies in the south of Italy, and for centuries the gods became more and more confused. Now under Augustus a purist reaction set in. The religion of Rome—and this is the second point to be borne in mind—was twofold in its nature. There was the religion of the individual and of the family, which revered

¹ Let others sing of Cæsar's martial prowess, we sing
Of Cæsar's altars, and the sacred days he instituted.

their Penates, and the religion of the city or state, rendering official worship *to its gods*. The division into *dii indigites* and *dii novensiles* (new settlers) is obviously unscientific.

Of the Latino-Sabine population about Rome quite a number of divinities were—or had been—not only not immoral, but of distinctly edifying influence. Vesta had brought virgin purity into honour; Juno, and other goddesses connected with marriage and nurture, had tended to keep matrons devoted and true; the Lares loved domestic virtues; the Manes, concord in families; Fides, good faith in contracts; Terminus, respect of rights. Tertullian, for all his Puritan rigour, even considers the religion of Numa “decent” (*Apol.*, 25).

It is consequently no wonder that Augustus threw himself heartily into the task of a religious revival, to stave off as far as might be the degeneracy of morals that was sapping the race. So we find that “he restored the sacred buildings which had either fallen in through decay or been burnt down, and those still standing he embellished lavishly. After he had become *Pontifex Maximus*—a dignity he would not assume till Lepidus (the disgraced holder of the office) was dead—he caused to be collected together from far and wide all the Greek and Latin books with oracles, which were circulating anonymously or had objectionable authors; and this literature the Emperor burnt, keeping none but the Sibylline oracles, and even here he made his own selection. He had two gilt bookshelves made for these oracles at the foot of the statue of the Palatine Apollo.

“The calendar reformed by Julius Cæsar had again got out of order. This Augustus righted once more . . . and had the sixth month (Sextilis) called *Augustus* after his own name, because he had obtained his first consulship and signal victories in this month. He

increased the number and prestige of the priests, as also their incomes. In this matter he supported particularly the Vestal Virgins. On a certain occasion, when one of these had died, and many Romans were resorting to every device that the lots should not be cast upon their daughters to fill the vacancy, Augustus asserted with an oath that if any of his own nieces had been of a suitable age, he would himself have offered her. Some of the ancient rites, that had gradually fallen into abeyance, he restored, as, for instance, the 'Augury of Salvation,' the *Diale Flaminium*, the sacred ceremony of the Lupercalia, the Jubilee Games (*Ludi Sæculares*), and the Compitalia."¹

¹ "Ædes sacras, vetustate collapsas, aut incendio absumptas, refecit easque & cæteras opulentissimis donis adornavit. . . . Postquam vero pontificatum maximum, quem numquam vivo Lepido auferre sustinuerat, mortuo demum suscepit, quidquid fatidicorum librorum Græci Latinique generis, nullis vel parum idoneis auctoribus, vulgo ferebatur, supra duo millia contracta undique cremavit; ac solos retinuit Sibylinos; * hos quoque delectu habito; condiditque duobus forulis [book-shelves] auratis sub Palatini Apollonis basi. Annum a D. Julio ordinatum, sed postea . . . confusum, rursus ad pristinam rationem redegit; . . . Sextilem mensem *e suo cognomine* nuncupavit, quia hoc sibi & primus consulatus, & insignes victoriæ, obtigissent. Sacerdotum & numerum & dignitatem, sed & commoda, auxit, præcipue Vestalium virginum. Cumque in demortuæ locum, aliam capi oporteret, ambirentque multi ne filias in sortem darent, adiuravit, si cuiusquam neptium *suarum* competeret ætas, *oblaturum se fuisse eam*. Nonnulla etiam ex antiquis cærimoniis, paulatim abolita, restituit; ut Salutis augurium, *Diale flaminium*, sacrum Lupercale, ludos Sæculares & Compitalicios." †

* These Sibylline oracles were probably a collection of eastern prophecies, among which may well have been some from the Jewish Bible. Cf. Pausanias, x. 13, 6: "Among the Hebrews of Palestine was a woman with a prophetic spirit, whose name was Sabbe. Some call her the Babylonian Sibyl, others the Egyptian. (παρὰ Ἑβραίοις τοῖς ὑπὲρ τῆς Παλαιστίνης γυνὴ χρεσμολόγος, ὄνομα δὲ αὐτῇ Σάββη. Οἱ δὲ αὐτὴν Βαβυλωνίαν, ἕτεροι δὲ Σίβυλλαν καλοῦσιν Ἀιγυπτίαν.) There may have been other prophetesses in Israel besides Deborah and Huldah (cf. p. 11).

† Sueton., *Octav.*, 30, 31. The historian adds: "Saecularibus ludis juvenes utriusque sexus prohibuit ullum nocturnum spectaculum frequentare, nisi cum aliquo maiore natu propinquorum." (In the great Jubilee games he forbade young people of both sexes to assist at any nocturnal assembly, except in company of some relative of maturer years.)

This passage of Suetonius is significant of the statecraft and personal aims of Augustus in this Reformation. Apollo was considered a god specially connected with the family of the Julii; and as Apollo of Actium had favoured Augustus at the most critical moment of his fortunes, he dedicated, in 28, a splendid temple to Apollo Palatinus, referred to above. In the preceding year a *Templum divi Julii* had been dedicated to his great uncle. At Rome his own Genius (guarding spirit) was placed between the two *Lares Compitales* at road-meetings. He himself was worshipped, with Dea Roma, only in the provinces, as noted above.

Ten years later, 17 B.C., the *Ludi Sæculares* were revived and given a wholly joyful character. They were to inaugurate a new and better era, and for the festival Horace wrote his *Carmen Sæculare*, doubtless under the Emperor's inspiration. He is careful to invoke Apollo at the outset:—

Phœbus and Dian, huntress fair,
To-day and always magnified,
Bright light of heaven, accord our prayer
This holy tide,
On which the Sibyl's volume wills
That youths and maidens without stain
To gods, who love the seven dear hills,
Should chant the strain.¹

Then, in a litany, various gods are invoked to prosper Rome in children, fruits of the earth, glory, and virtue. A hint in favour of clemency and conciliation for all

¹ Phœbe silvarumque potens Diana,
lucidum cæli decus, o colendi
semper & culti, date quæ precamur
tempore sacro,
quo Sibyllini monuere versus
virgines lectas puerosque castos
dis, quibus septem placuere colles,
dicere carmen.

parties is supplied by a reference to Æneas: "O prompt him still the foe to smite, the fallen to spare!"—¹

Now Media dreads our Alban steel,
Our victories land and ocean o'er;
Scythia and Ind in suppliance kneel,
So proud before.
Faith, Honour, ancient Modesty,
And Peace and Virtue, spite of scorn,
Come back to earth, and Plenty, see,
With teeming horn.

—Conington's Translation.²

But the noblest monument of this revival of exterior religious worship is to be found in Vergil's *Æneid*. The line of Iulus is throughout glorified, but not with the unpleasingly direct adulation that permeates Horace's *Odes*; the climax is delicately reached with the tears of Æneas for Turnus, whom he had had to slay (Turnus having about him all the characteristics of Anthony); while throughout, religious rites are aptly introduced and melodiously described.

Augustus had joined several religious colleges to infuse new life into them. Finally, in 12 B.C., he had himself elected *Pontifex Maximus*, and was thus legally entitled to direct the "Reformation." In the *Tabula Maffeana*³ we read, on the eve of the Nones of March: *Hoc die Cæsar. Pontif. maxim. fact. est.*

The *tribunicia potestas* had already made his person *sacrosanct*, and the present dignity consummated in him all the traditional titles to respect open to a Roman.

¹ "Bellante prior iacentem—lenis in hostem."

² Iam mari terraque manus potentes
Medus Albanasque timet secures;
iam Scythæ responsa petunt, superbi
nuper, & Indi.

Iam Fides & Pax & Honos Pudorque
priscus & neglecta redire Virtus
audet, apparetque beata pleno
Copia cornu.

³ Found on a marble slab in 1547. Its date is between A.D. 3 and 5. In an inscription from the Arch of Pavia, the titles of *pontifex maximus*, *augur*, *quindecimvir sacris faciundis*, and *septemvir epulonum* are given to Augustus in 7 B.C. These were the four great sacerdotal colleges of Rome (Duruy, *History of Rome*, iv. 87).

This pontificate was now to be a prerogative of all succeeding emperors, till these became Christian and surrendered spirituals to the Papacy.

Some years after Augustus assumed this office, Ovid began and dedicated to him a summary of the religion, history, and civil institutions of Rome from the beginning ; and later continued it till the Emperor's death. These were his *FASTI*, a calendar covering the first six months of the year, and they must have been dear indeed to the Emperor's heart. It is a repertory of the old Italian traditions and " undoubtedly one of the most important works that have come down to us " (Paley).

With all this appeal to the poetic and patriotic feelings of man, fundamental morality and religion were not touched upon. The idea of a Creator, of a Witness to our every thought, lay beyond the mental purview of one and all. Augustus was unable to reach the soul, unwotting as he was, and unworthy perhaps to know, of its true nature.

Nay more, his bonds being but legal, they mostly burst as of themselves at his death, and the orgies of the half-century following bespoke the failure but too well. A HIGHER CALL was needed, and imperatively needed, to save the reeling peoples ; and behold, it had already been heard of in Jerusalem, where a Child had for a span dissociated Himself from His legal " parents " and stated He must be about His real Father's business—to lead mankind to God. He was to show Himself in very truth the August One, the *Divus Augustus, Princeps Pacis, Pater Futuri sæculi*.¹

¹ Before this sun of Justice rose, He had sent before Him His Morning Star, to arrest the attention of the nations. This Morning Star, according to the quaint but most apposite comparison of St. John Chrysostom, was the Septuagint, the Greek version of the Jewish Bible. This translation began to break down the barriers set both by Jewish exclusiveness and by the Hebrew language, and being written in a popular Greek that could be understood from Babylon to the Columns of Hercules, and from Elephantine to the Danube, it rendered intelligible to the outward ear, wherever Jews had settled, the precious truths of pure monotheism and of Messianic hopes.

PART II.

PAGAN RULE *VERSUS* CHRISTIAN RULE

(*Under Theodosius the Great*).

LATE FOURTH CENTURY CHRONOLOGY.

CHURCH.	STATE.
337 (340?). Birth of St. Ambrose.	346 (<i>circ.</i>). Birth of Theodosius I.
	360-363. Julian the Apostate.
366. Damasus, Pope.	363. Jovian.
	364. Valentinian I.
369. Eutropius' <i>Breviarium</i> .	368. Theodosius in Britain.
370. Ambrose Prefect at Milan.	369. Gratianus Augustus.
374. Ambrose elected Bishop (December 7th?).	374. Theodosius defeats Sarmatians.
	375. Gratian and Valentinian II., Emperors.
378. GRATIAN'S EDICT OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.	378. Theodosius commander on Danube.
377-380. <i>De Fide ad Gr. August.</i>	
379. <i>De Spiritu Snct. ad Gr. August.</i>	379. Theodosius Augustus (in East). His baptism.
380 (Feb.). EDICT IN FAVOUR OF FAITH OF PETER AND DAMASUS.	
381. First Council of C'ple. confirmed faith of Nicæa.	
384-5. <i>Relationes Symmachi, Prefecti Romæ.</i>	
384. Siricius, Pope.	
386. DE OFFICIIS MINISTRO- RUM. Ambrose victoriously resists imperial order to give up churches.	387. Theodosius pardons Antioch rioters.
	388. Theodosius defeats Maximus (Aquileia).
	389-391. Triumph at Rome, and State reorganised.
390. Ambrose inflicts penance on Theodosius for Thessalonica massacre.	
391. Paganism forbidden. Temple of Serapis at Alexandria destroyed.	
392. <i>De Obitu Valentiniani Consolatio</i> . Jerome, <i>De Viris Illustribus</i> .	392. Valentinian murdered at Vienna, May 15th. Eugenius Augustus champions paganism in West.
	394. Theodosius crushes Eugen. and visits Rome.
395. <i>De Obitu Theodosii Oratio</i> , Feb. 25th, Theodosius † Jan. 17.	395. In East, Arcadius; in West, Honorius. Goths under Alaric in Greece.
397. Death of St. Ambrose (April 4th).	
403. Close of Chronicle of Sulpitius Severus.	404. The last <i>Ludi Saeculares</i> . Gladiatorial combat abolished.

CHAPTER I.

THE TIDE OF THOUGHT AT ROME IN A.D. 350.

IN one of the great utterances of Leo XIII. that have commanded attention in all enlightened quarters, there is to be found a statement, calmly and deliberately worded,¹ that may fittingly be taken as a motto for any study of Christian antiquity. Never has it been proven false, and if it be but voiced anew with an unimpassioned appeal to history, its veracity will become more and more realised. The Pontiff's phrase runs thus : " In truth, whatever in the State is of chief avail for the common welfare ; whatever has been usefully established to curb the licence of rulers who are opposed to the true interests of the people, or to keep in check the leading authorities from unwarrantably interfering in municipal or family affairs ; whatever tends to uphold the honour, manhood, and equal rights of individual citizens ;—of all these things, as the monuments of past ages bear witness, the Catholic Church has always been the originator, the promoter, or the guardian."

Our investigation in the following pages is to bear upon " the monuments of past ages," and in particular on the evolution of Church influence in the momentous fourth century, when first Christianity was put to fullest test of its worth by having to face and legislate

¹ Encyclical *Immortale Dei*, " On the Christian Constitution of States," 1885.

upon imperial social problems. We shall thus be treating of Christian public spirit at its birth, and may consequently hope that it reveal itself as tending "to curb the licence of rulers" and "uphold the honour of individual citizens," the Pontiff's assertion will be admitted as warranted in no little degree. The results achieved so speedily will appear the more striking by reason of paganism's systematic opposition to the now exalted Cross; though in the retractile spasms of death, the serpent of idol-worship and sensuality was still coiled about a host of Roman hearts, and its venom was ever and again being instilled to goad the worshippers of Imperialism to frenzy and deeds of violence, and to cast a torpor on Christian minds and poison their faith.

After the toleration edicts in the second decade of the fourth century, thirty years passed without bringing about determined action against paganism. It is true that new privileges (till then reserved to pagans) were granted to Christians, and endowments to churches; and Constantine, when establishing his residence at Byzantium in 330, did build up a Christian Constantinople; but the majority of his subjects were still pagans, and in the West particularly he exercised caution. His sons (Constantius and Constans), succeeding in 337, did have recourse to force, and sacrifices to the gods were forbidden (341), and even under pain of death. But this cannot have been strictly enforced, since the law was renewed in 353, and then for forty years the tide of battle rolled.

After writhing for eight years, the crushed serpent turned and bit. Julian the Apostate succeeded his cousin Constantius in 361.¹ He had long been a pagan at heart, and now determined to reinstate idolatry. Some Christians were put to death; all the "Gali-

¹ See Paul Allard's three brilliant volumes, *Julien l'Apostat* (1906-1910).

leans " were removed from the higher offices, and the Church lost every prerogative. Using for the most part a more insidious weapon than force, Julian sought to requicken paganism through Neoplatonic idealism, by reforming the pagan priests and imitating Christian institutions, such as houses for the poor and hostleries for strangers. He also wrote three books, *Adversus Christianos*,¹ among other hostile works, and sought to handicap Christian youth by forbidding them the classics. Julian's prowess against the Goths along the Rhine² brought out another aspect of his strange sinister character, and universal fear held the churches.³ It was consequently little short of providential that Julian had not reigned two years when he imprudently exposed himself in battle to the north of Bagdad (Ctesiphon) and was mortally wounded, most likely by a Persian arrow.

Paganism had fought and lost, and though it twice sought to reconquer the sceptre (under the usurpers Maximus and Eugenius, as will appear in the sequel), the present defeat already made its cause a desperate one. The rule of the Empire now passed definitely into Christian hands. Jovian (363) restored to Christianity its privileges, and the pagans were deprived of those they had newly acquired. His successors, the brothers Valentinian I. and Valens, grew stricter by degrees, first forbidding only nocturnal sacrifices, but later all sacrifices save those of incense. Valentinian I. ruled in the West till 375, when his son Gratian succeeded. Definite steps were now to be taken by this eminently Christian emperor to eradicate idolatry; and in the

¹ A refutation of the Gospels; partly extant.

² Julian defeated seven kings of the Allemanni encamped over against Strasbourg, throwing their forces back over the Rhine and capturing the chief king, Chnodomaire, who died a prisoner on Mt. Celius.

³ St. J. Chrysostom says (*Advers. Jud.*, v. 11): "Our affairs were in lamentable state, we trembled for our lives . . . some of the faithful remained hid at home, others emigrated to the desert . . ."

last quarter of the century the faith and all it stood for came openly to the fore. Paganism, moreover, was in the throes of death, and we may well pause over these years, wherein intensest strife was kindled by the clash of arms and the clash of the intellect. Even the superficial observer will realise that civil and religious governance were reaching a crisis, and closer study will bring this out the better.

Besides the old state religion that was now making its last stand, and in which Octavius Augustus had himself set the seed of death by deifying Cæsar and the empire,¹ Christianity was also facing a far subtler foe in a Neoplatonic synthesis of pagan creeds such as Julian had championed. The lofty ideals of the Persian religion in particular, and the mysteries of the "Magna Mater" Cybele, had so fascinated the higher classes, weary of a hollow materialism, that many lived a double religious life, or, rather, no longer entertained feelings of sacred respect for the state and its functions. Thus we can appreciate the significance of the inscription on the tomb of Vettius Pretextatus,² a fourth-century magnate. It is in two columns, the one rehearsing his religious titles, the other his offices as magistrate. Among the former titles we find those of hierophante, neocore, father,³ and of one purified in the taurobolium expiatory sacrifice. Man's innate sense of right and wrong had so brought home to many the need of personal purification, that noblemen not a few (between A.D. 150-390) underwent the rite of having a bull slaughtered on a scaffold above them, and letting the warm blood bathe their whole person.⁴ The wife of Vettius, in whose name the epitaph is

¹ Cf. Part I., pp. 31, 36.

² *Corpus Inscr. Lat.*, vi., 1779.

³ In the Mithraic cult the degrees of initiation (recalling something of Freemasonry) were: Corax, Cryphius, Miles, Leo, Persa, Heliodromos, Pater (cf. Paul Allard, *op. cit.*).

⁴ Prudentius (*Peristephanon*, x. 1011-1055) graphically describes such a scene; cf. also Firmicus Maternus (Migne, xii.).

written, took his devotions most seriously, for after rehearsing his state dignities, she continues: "These are, however, but of little moment; pious initiate as thou wert, thou didst keep in the secret of thy heart the truths learnt in the sacred mysteries, thou didst adore according to knowledge the manifold divinity of the Immortals. . . . Thou didst ever esteem vile and unstable the honours and powers so desired by men, and didst assume with pride no insignia save those of the divine priesthoods."

These sanguinary purifications, pertaining to the rites of Cybele, spread far through the Empire, as inscriptions at Narbonne and Lyons show.¹ Among the legionaries, however, unto their farthest outposts, the Persian Sun-god Mithra was honoured as the unconquerable: "*Invictus de petra natus*," "*Sol Invictus Deus Mithra*," and his small chapels, not unlike the earliest catacomb churches, are found up to and beyond the Rhine. At Rome the god was less crudely conceived, as we find as early as in Plutarch (*Isis and Osiris*), who reproduces fairly accurately the Persian conception of Mithra as intellectual light personified, and mediator between man and the Supreme God. Julian now deftly wove these ideas into Neo-Platonism.

Here was indeed a rival to Christianity, and some truth attaches to Renan's assertion that "*si le Christianisme eût été arrêté dans sa croissance par une maladie mortelle, le monde eût été mithriaste*"² (if some deadly sickness had overcome Christianity in its time of development, the world would have taken mithraism for its religion). At Rome alone thirty-two temples or chapels have been discovered. It is significant enough of the Church's sense of peril, that at this very time (about 355) the celebration of Christ's nativity was anticipated by twelve days so as to fall

¹ Orelli, Nos. 2, 322, and *seq.*

² *Marc. Aurèle*, p. 579.

on December 25th (VIII. Kal. Jan), when Romans were now keeping the Persian feast of the *Sol Invictus*,¹ and this observance of Christmas was extended to the East between 370 and 380, just as our period opens.² Thus in her liturgy the Church seems to have adopted the polemic principle that Paul and John had acted upon in their writings, namely, that of meeting false teachers on their own ground, e.g., the *Logos* of John as against Philo and Gnosis; and Paul's *pleroma* (Coloss. ii. 9). The intention throughout can hardly have been other than to supplant, to eclipse the glimmerings of truth with the full radiance of the one great Sun, and of the one divine philosophy revealed from heaven.

Finally, the Church was just about to issue victorious from the peril of false brethren. Arianism had become nearly world-spread, mainly through the protection of the emperors Constans and Valens (364-378); and as its theory of the *Logos*, the first creation of God, approximated not a little to the intellectually conceived Mithra, the probabilities of a union, defensive and aggressive, against the true faith were great indeed.

Momentous, therefore, could not fail to be the pontificates of Popes Damasus (366-384) and Siricius (384-399); and the lives and deeds of the men who then stood up for the Church may well arrest our attention.

The scene of this drama of ideals, high and low, was a bipartite empire. The tendency to split into two halves was manifested shortly after the days of Augustus by the division of the Imperial Secretariat into offices *ab epistolis Latinis* and *ab epistolis Græcis*. This tendency was fostered, though uninten-

¹ Doubtless the commemoration of the winter solstice, when the days begin to lengthen, i.e. the sun's "ascendancy" becomes apparent.

² See St. J. Chrysostom's Sermon for Christmas, preached at Antioch in 386 (Migne, *P.G.*, 49, 351); cf. S. Leo, *Serm.*, xxi. 6. We are aware Mgr. Duchesne would not accept this as the reason why Christmas is kept on December 25th; but see Dölger, *Sol Salutis* (Munster, 1920).

tionally, by Diocletian, who sought to place authority "in commission," with an Augustus resident in the East and another in the West, each with a Cæsar as "auxiliary with right of succession." It would be hard to conceive of a greater incentive to the ambitious ; and though under Constantine, Julian, and Theodosius the principle of unification prevailed, it was by way of reaction—only to be three times sacrificed after their deaths. As for interior government, the jealousies of the emperors, as well as sporadic attempts at reform, led to such division and restriction of the powers of officials as ultimately to centralise all power in the monarch's person. Simultaneously the enormous imports from North Africa, Ceylon, and China, etc., and consequent export of precious metals, led to depreciation of coinage ; and Diocletian's Edict (301), attempting to fix maximum prices of labour and commodities, was vain. The nerve and sinew of the Empire had gone, the saving of souls was becoming the only practical ideàl, and there were those who knew it.

CHAPTER II.

AMBROSE AND GRATIAN (375-383).

"I GRIEVE for thee, Gratian, my son, my well-beloved. Numberless are the tokens thou gavest me of thy devotedness."¹ Thus spoke Bishop Ambrose of Milan in an imperial funeral oration. Nor were the words mere oratory, for Gratian's sentiments towards Ambrose had been truly filial.

To grasp the situation, we must study the antecedents of St. Ambrose. He was born at Treves, between A.D. 337 and 340, his father being Prefect of Gallia Narbonensis. Early destined to follow his father's career, he was educated at Rome, making brilliant studies in literature, law, and rhetoric, and mastering Greek thoroughly. In 370 he was appointed consular prefect of Liguria and Emilia, with headquarters at Milan, and he proved an excellent administrator. With these accomplishments his spirit of religion fairly kept pace. His family was not only Christian, but had given martyrs to the Church, and from his earliest years there was added to his mother's good influence that of his sister Marcellina, older than him by ten years, and who received the veil of virginity at the hands of Pope Liberius in 353.²

¹ "Doleo in te, fili Gratiane, suavis mihi valde. Plurima dedisti tuæ pietatis insignia." *De Obitu Valentiniani Consolatio* (Migne, xvi. 1385).

² Ambrose has preserved, in his *De Virginibus*, libri iii., the Pope's sermon on this occasion (the earliest discourse of the kind extant).

Consequently, when in 374 the Bishop of Milan, Auxentius, died, and the Arians sought to intrude another partisan of their own upon the episcopal see, the words of Ambrose, endeavouring to keep order and stem the tumult, arrested the attention of the people, who felt that no fitter candidate for the episcopate in those days of stress could be found than the accomplished and religious-minded prefect. In spite of his protests—(*Quam resistebam ne ordinarer!*)—he needs must yield. Being still but a catechumen,¹ he was baptised by a Catholic priest at his own request, and then, after due reception of the lesser orders, was consecrated, apparently on December 7th.

The new Bishop straightway gave evidence of his sterling worth by making over his landed property to the Church, and his personal wealth to the poor.² His brother Satyrus volunteered to care for the temporals of the diocese, so the Bishop was left free to exercise the sacred ministry. He set to reading the great Greek theologians, particularly St. Basil. To Origen also he became much indebted, but here his faith was sound enough to avoid the eccentric views of the Greek. All these studies he went through, true Roman as he was, to practical purpose, reproducing in Latin garb the brilliant theology which the Greek Fathers (particularly the two Gregories and Basil) were just perfecting against the Arians and Pneumatomachists, very much as Cicero and Vergil had freely reproduced Greek philosophy and epic.

Ambrose not only gave his keen intellect to these studies of Christian revelation, but his gift of rhetoric

¹ It was then customary enough for the Church, perhaps with necessary discretion, to defer baptism till men were well on in life. Cf. St. Martin and also Constantine, Theodosius. The century was, indeed, half-pagan, half-Christian.

² He vested a life interest on his sister, Marcellina, who necessarily lived in private. His possessions *as prætor* went to the State.

and his consciousness of a great cause now combined to make his influence as a preacher quite phenomenal. It is not too much to rank him as second only to St. John Chrysostom in power of expression and in deftness to fashion his theme not only to the needs of the day, extraordinary and momentous as they were, but also to the homely spiritual wants of the humblest of his flock. This pastoral duty so absorbed St. Ambrose that most of his writings grew out of his sermons. Hence they are fresh and forceful, and many pithy sayings of the Saint became household words.

With the election of Ambrose none was more pleased than Valentinian, who, as we have seen, became Emperor of the West one year after Julian the Apostate died. But the good understanding was short-lived, for Valentinian died in the year following the Bishop's appointment, and there succeeded the Emperor's son Gratian, then barely sixteen; while Valentinian II., his step-brother (only four years of age), became an Augustus. Here again the seeds of discord were sown, for Gratian's step-mother formed a faction against him, her rival's son, and shortly joined hands with the Arians. Gratian had been educated in the true faith, and made no secret of his attitude from the first. He was, however, neither strong in character nor skilled in theology, and soon had direst need to turn to Ambrose.

It fell out in this wise. The eastern rampart against the tide of nations, who were ever tending westwards (towards some ideal land of the setting sun), was the Danube for the Greek part of the Empire, and the Rhine for the Latin West. In 378 Gratian defeated the Lentienses (Allemanni) near Colmar, but his uncle, Valens, in the East fared otherwise. The Goths, fleeing from the Huns, had begged to be admitted into Macedonia, and then, disregarding the stipulation of disarmament, turned on the Romans and utterly routed

them at Adrianople, in the same year (378) in August. Valens had already sought for help from Gratian, who was dismayed at the thought of lessening his own forces at such a juncture and of mixing with Eastern matters where the Arian heretics were lording it; he turned to Ambrose for advice. The reply came, prompt and complete. Ambrose exhorted Gratian to proceed at once to the East, as the integrity of the Empire was the one safeguard of civilisation. As for the Arians, he supplied Gratian with a treatise of his own, proving the Catholic position to perfection.¹ Thus his word reached straightway to Eastern Christendom, and the Emperor at least found the work of such avail that he soon besought Ambrose to treat for him similarly of the Holy Ghost,² the definition of whose divinity was soon to clinch for ever in Catholic minds their faith in the Triune god.

From the blow at Adrianople the Empire was able to rally, and by the artifice of making different treaties with the various barbarian tribes, their power was paralysed. Still, Gratian felt unequal to the task, and sent for Theodosius from Spain. The latter was the son of a general of Valentinian, and had had experience in Britain³ and against the Sarmatians. He was now appointed commander on the Danube (378). He immediately gained some fresh victories over the Sarmatians, and was made Augustus at Sirmium in January, 379. At the end of the year he was crowned at Constantinople, and the Eastern realm dwelt secure.

Besides thus saving the East politically, Gratian also turned the scale there in favour of Catholicity. The Arian persecution of the holders of the Nicene Creed (teaching the consubstantiality of Father and Son) was put an end to, and though Gratian published

¹ *De Fide, Libri III.*

² *De Spiritu Sancto.*

³ Here he assisted his father in driving back the Picts and Scots.

an edict of toleration, the cause of Arianism was lost, particularly owing to the moral ascendancy of the great bishops who had braved all—threats, exile, and death itself—rather than admit any degradation of the Person of Christ. For them He was absolute God, co-equal with the Father.—And here those who rejoice to speak of the “natural evolution of Christian dogma,” will do well to consider what this doctrine meant for the men of that time. By setting Father and Son on a footing of equality, by defining that They are one by nature, this dogma ran counter to nearly all the popular religious and philosophical speculation of the day, which revelled in series of triads, demi-gods, eons, or subordinate spirits linking up earth to heaven, or at least (like Mithraism) believed in some vague mediator who was not the highest great God. Even the Arians considered the Son not really God at all, but only the first of creatures, and appealed to many Scripture texts. So the enemy was in the house as well as in the pagan world. Nothing daunted, the Church had fought for over fifty years against overwhelming odds (ever since the Council of Nicæa in 325).

Julian the Apostate had allowed many Nicæan bishops to return to their sees (then filled by Arians), so as to make confusion more confounded; but they were soon expelled again by the Arian Valens. It was only on the eve of the Adrianople disaster, mentioned above, that he recalled a number of the bishops—*sera penitentia* (belated repentance), as Jerome and Rufinus observe. When Gratian reached the East he naturally ratified this decree.

Theodosius was baptised in Constantinople in 379 by Bishop Acholius of Thessalonica, who was a staunch upholder of the Nicæan faith, and whose name we shall meet again. On February 27th of the following year, Theodosius issued his decree enjoining “that all should profess the creed which the Apostle Peter had

taught the Romans of old, and which was now adhered to by the Pontiff Damasus and by Peter of Alexandria, a man of apostolic sanctity" (*Cod. Theod.*, xvi., i. 2). In 381 the triumph of orthodoxy was celebrated by the second œcumenical Council, held at Constantinople. The Church not only solemnly reasserted the consubstantiality of Father and Son, but set the Holy Ghost also (or better, proclaimed Him to be) on the same high pinnacle of absolute divinity (*simul adoratur*). This pronouncement (previously made at a few minor councils) is another proof of the independent spirit of the true Church, for it was a further contradiction of the theories of the time. There was here nothing of that spirit of compromise which is so strong in many modern theologians.

At the Council it was also decreed that the Bishop of Constantinople should be recognised as a Patriarch second in dignity to the Bishop of Rome. Antioch and Alexandria had been endeavouring to predominate at Constantinople, so it was considered wise to exclude their particularism by creating a new Patriarchate for the second Rome.¹ It is one of the ironies of history that a church founded expressly to further Catholic unity should later have provoked a schism not yet healed to-day.

Finally, at the close of the Council (July 30th, 381), Theodosius published a decree, enjoining that all churches be made over to the holders of the true faith, and even indicating, for each civil diocese,² what prelate

¹ Cf. Duchesne, *Histoire Ancienne de l'Eglise*, vol. 2, p. 439: "Antioche, la métropole traditionnelle de l'Orient . . . ne sembla pas être un rempart suffisant contra le danger alexandrin. Comme centre de ralliement on lui préféra la ville de Constantin, la nouvelle Rome." (Antioch the traditional metropolis of the East . . . did not seem to afford sufficient protection against the ascendancy of Alexandria. The city of Constantine, the new Rome, was fixed upon instead as a rallying-centre.)

² In our study of Augustus we saw how the original provinces of the Empire were divided into *dioceses* and *conventus* (Part I., p. 30). After the ruin of the Empire the terms survived in ecclesiastical government.

would be acceptable. The East was now fairly pacified, not merely as to religious questions, but also as regards military operations. Theodosius had been spending the last few summer seasons in battling against the invaders from the north, and Gratian might well congratulate himself on his choice of a colleague.

Gratian meanwhile had himself been standing by the Church in the West with very analogous results. The story of his administration was one of gradual advance to meet the wishes of the Church. The influence of Ambrose was now ever increasing. It extended, indeed, throughout the nine momentous years of Gratian's reign, not by any ambition of the Bishop, since other causes, both moral and political, are amply accountable therefor. *Morally*, the young Emperor turned instinctively to the man of strongest character and widest experience; *politically*, while his own capital of half the West (Britain, Gaul, and Spain) was at Treves, the boy Valentinian II. and Justina had their residence in Milan. Justina's rule (over Italy and Illyria) was little more than nominal from the first; and lost proportionately as the pagan and Arian factions were brought to nothing. But these died hard indeed, and our Saint needed all his intrepidity and diplomacy to oppose them effectively. Thus he was practically Prime Minister, for the two great lines of imperial policy were then the safeguarding of the realm and the elimination of the pagan habits and observances, which Romans found so hard to dissociate from their ancestral glory. And precisely these issues Ambrose considered vital to the cause of Christianity.

Consequently, besides preaching almost daily, as Latin bishop had never preached,¹ and caring for the

¹ St. Augustine was one of his hearers, and these sermons completed his conversion. Of Ambrose's eloquence he says: "Verbis ejus suspendebat intentus and delectabar suavitate sermonis" (*Confessions*). (I would hang on his lips, and was charmed by the sweet manner of his discourse.)

poor, he gave assistance in altering the tone of legislation, and his independent arbitration was often had recourse to. He spoke with scorn of the Vestal virgins, whose number of seven it was so difficult to recruit, even for the temporary vow involved. All state subvention of pagan ritual was soon discontinued. In 379, during his first visit to Rome since his consecration (summoned to a council by Pope Damasus), a famine broke out, and nothing short of his liberality and resourcefulness succeeded in preventing the aggrieved pagans and heretics from open riot against the strong man of the Empire.

Before the murder of Gratian in 383, and with his assent, Ambrose struck two telling blows against paganism and Arianism. He was manifestly extremely on the alert against the Arians, for two bishops at the outskirts of the Empire, along the Danube, were brought to render an account of their faith at a council Ambrose convened at Aquileia (which opened just after that of Constantinople was over, on September 3rd, 381). The examination (preserved *in extenso*¹) was directed by Ambrose clearly and firmly; and as the two prelates were unwilling to condemn a letter of Arius that was read to them, the assembled Bishops of Upper Italy and Pannonia, etc., deposed them both.

The other blow was struck and went home the following year (382), when the Roman Senate was amazed at discovering that the altar and Statue of Victory had been removed from the Senate Hall. Emblematic as the altar was of the prowess of their race, even Christian senators had tolerated it. Delegates were now despatched to Milan with a senatorial protest, which the Christian members did not at once oppose. But the mission was fruitless, for the palace gates at Milan remained closed against them. So little

¹ Migne, xvi. 916-939, *Gesta Concilii Aquileiensis*; also Mansi, iii. 599-619.

intimidated was the imperial counsellor, that shortly after this state subvention was withdrawn from the pagan ministers of worship.

The next year brought calamity, and Ambrose had to play a new part. A soldier, Maximus, headed a revolt in Britain, and was proclaimed Emperor (383). He defeated Gratian near Paris, and pursued and slew him at Lyons. All Gratian's transalpine dominions recognised the usurper, and Justina, fearing for Valentinian's own provinces, besought Ambrose to approach Maximus in person and seek terms of peace. Ambrose, after some hesitation, determined to do so, as he would be championing the cause of the widow and fatherless, as well as of the world's peace. His heart was bleeding for Gratian, for six years later we find him still exclaiming, in words we prefixed to this chapter, as characteristic of the mutual esteem of Emperor and Prelate, of State and Church: "I grieve for thee, Gratian, my son, my well-beloved. Numberless are the tokens thou gavest me of thy devotedness." This plaint sounds as a faint echo of the intimacy there had long existed between them, for Gratian had once written to the Bishop: "May the Godhead preserve thee many years, Father mine, who art a minister of the eternal God, whom we adore, Jesus Christ" ¹ (letter of Gratian by his own hand). In those days of fair promise Ambrose had returned the greeting: "May Almighty God deign to keep thee many long years blessed and prosperous, and consolidate thy kingdom in all glory and in perpetual peace, my Lord and Emperor Augustus, elect of God, most glorious of princes." ² These words

¹ "Divinitas te servet per multos annos, *parens*, et cultor Dei æterni quem colimus, Jesu Christi." (Epistola Gratiani manu propria.)

² "Beatissimum te & florentissimum Deus omnipotens . . . tueri ætate prolixa, & regnum tuum in summa gloria & pace perpetua confirmare dignetur, domine Imperator Auguste, divino electe iudicio, principum gloriosissime."

have the true ring of Roman nobility and Christian charity.

But if the "great glory" (*summa gloria*) had been substantially realised, the "full many years" (*ætas prolixa*) had not been granted, and it may well be the anxious Ambrose set out on his perilous mission over the Alps with the express hope of conciliating Justina, and winning her from her dallying with Arians. But such hope of conciliation was to prove vain.

CHAPTER III.

AMBROSE AND DAMASUS.

WHILE Ambrose takes his anxious way over the Alps, we turn to examine the most vital seat of ecclesiastical power, before the issues to be treated become over-involved. And, first, we must expose the fallacy that in proportion as Constantinople became more exclusively the pivot of the Empire in civil and political life, the authority and jurisdiction of the Roman Pontiffs developed—aggressively encroaching and feeding upon the purple dignities of the Western World.

That the decay of civil administration at Rome synchronises to some extent with the growth of practical efficiency on the part of papal jurisdiction, could not well be denied. But this is no more than a half-truth at best. For, on the one hand, Pope Damasus has scarce ever spoken more imperiously than had Pope Clement, well-nigh three hundred years before ;¹ and as for civil governance in the West, it was now exercised, not from Rome, but from Milan, as our reader will have inferred. Were the above contention correct, it would logically follow that ecclesiastical jurisdiction in Italy would at least have tended to

¹ Denzinger, *Enchiridion*, 41 : “ Sin autem quidam (Corinthiorum) non obtemperaverint iis quæ ille (Xtus) per nos dixit, cognoscant, offensioni periculo non parvo sese implicaturos esse. . . .”—“ But if some (of the Corinthians) do not obediently fulfil those things He (Christ) utters through our mouth, let them understand that they will involve themselves in no small peril and guilt.”

centre round the statesman-bishop of Cis-Alpine Gaul at the expense of Rome.

We shall briefly examine the vital issue raised, considering the relations of St. Ambrose with Pope Damasus, who sat at Rome from 366 to 384, i.e. through the main part of our Bishop's career.

Damasus was very probably born at Rome, and grew up to manhood as a cleric attached to the church of St. Lorenzo (outside the walls). He mixed freely with the highest class of society, as is clear, since we find him for instance asking of Vettius Agorius Prætextatus, head of all the pagan priesthoods (to whom the reader has been already introduced), why he did not at last become a Christian. To whom the nobleman made answer that he had no objection, provided he were made Pope. Damasus was likewise of dignified bearing, for we find that after he had paid a visit to the mother and sister of Ambrose, when the latter was still quite young, the little boy was wont to mimic his stateliness.

In the course of the sixties life became earnest for both. In 366 Damasus was elected Pope by an overwhelming majority of the clergy, but this did not prevent a Puritan minority from setting up an anti-pope Ursinus. The conflict grew sanguinary in the very churches, till in 367 Valentinian I. intervened, banishing Ursinus to Cologne, but soon allowing him to come so far south as Milan. Two years later Damasus excommunicated Auxentius, the Arian Bishop of that city; so that it is no great wonder that the parties aggrieved should have combined against the Pope. It was at this time that Ambrose was appointed Prefect at Milan, shortly to become Bishop himself on the death of Auxentius (374). Ursinus continued his intrigues, influencing Justina, the Arian step-mother of Gratian.

We have seen how uncompromisingly and ably Ambrose dealt with the remnants of Arianism in the

Danube provinces, and we shall shortly witness how valiantly he withstood a siege within his own city. Here it behoves us study the principle of doctrine and jurisdiction that underlay this stout-heartedness. Was Ambrose an ambitious diplomat casting the spell of his prestige over young emperors, in order to mould them to his will? Was Milan to become the great ecclesiastical centre of at least the West, or was Ambrose preparing the way for succeeding to the Roman See? We have seen how ably he dealt with the rioters at Rome in 379, and the regard thence accruing to him.

The facts of the case are simple, and the more striking for that very reason. It was *after* Pope Damasus had pronounced definitely against the Arians Ursacius, Valens, and Auxentius (at a Council at Rome in 381), that episcopal assemblies were held to like purpose in Sicily, Dalmatia, Dardania, Macedonia, the two Epiri, Achaia, and Crete, i.e. in all the provinces of Illyricum save those closest the Danube.¹ There was consequently nothing aggressive on the part of Ambrose in completing the good work by calling a synod at Aquileia (actually delayed till September, 381). Pope Damasus had no need to be represented here, as its whole trend (leading to the deposition of the Arian bishops, as we have seen) was identical with his Church policy, and he had himself two years before appointed Acholius (Bishop of Thessalonica) to be vicar-apostolic of Illyricum, now transferred to the eastern half of the Empire.²

¹ Duchesne, *op. cit.*, ii. 471.

² As related above, Acholius baptised Theodosius soon after. His activity in the East was considerable, and it appears quite gratuitous not to consider him in all as the representative of Damasus, and consequently at the Council of Constantinople as well. Says Ambrose to the successor of Acholius: "Percurrebat omnia excursu frequenti, Constantinopolim, Achaiam, Epirum, Italiam, ut iuniores eum non possent consequi." (He was really ubiquitous, travelling frequently to Con-

It was "the faith of Peter and Damasus" that Theodosius had proclaimed in 380 as the one to be universally observed. With this faith Ambrose was at one, heart and soul. But did he agree with all that this faith logically implied in the mind of Damasus?—namely, with his assertion in his great decretal of 382¹ that: "Although the universality of churches spread over the Catholic world forms the one bridal-chamber of Christ, yet is the Holy Roman Church preferred before the others, not by any synodal decrees, but as having obtained its primacy by the evangelical voice of Our Lord and Saviour, saying, 'Thou art Peter, and upon this Rock I will build My Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it. . . .' The See of the Apostle Peter, of the Church of Rome, is therefore the first, without spot or wrinkle or ought of the kind."²

Damasus felt, and it was now explicitly acknowledged by East and West, that the Roman See was the touch-stone of orthodoxy,—but what of jurisdiction? Let us try to ascertain the mind of the Pope, and then inquire to what extent Ambrose and the Church at large were at one with him in the matter.

Just before the Council we find Damasus *chiding* the Bishops of Macedonia for electing the cynic Maximus as Bishop of Constantinople in opposition to Greg. Nazianzen: "While perusing your letters, beloved Brethren, I was saddened not a little. . . . I have

stantinople, or again to Achaia, Epirus, and Italy, so that even younger men could not keep pace with him.) (Epist., xvi., *Ad Anysium*, Migne, xvi. 959.)

¹ See critical text in *Journal of Theological Studies*, 1900, pp. 556 and *seq.* Also note *infra*, p. 63.

² "Quamvis universæ per orbem catholicæ diffusæ ecclesiæ unus thalamus Christi sit, Sancta tamen Romana ecclesia nullis synodiciis constitutis ceteris ecclesiis prælata est, sed evangelica voce Domini & Salvatoris nostri primatum obtenuit [*sic*]: 'Tu es Petrus,' inquires, 'et super' . . . et quæcunque ligaveris super terram erit ligatum . . . etc. Est ergo prima Petri apostoli sedis Romanæ ecclesiæ 'non habens maculam nec rugam nec aliquid eiusmodi.'"

heard that a Council is to be held in Constantinople, and I urge it upon thee, venerable Brother Acholius, to exert thyself so that an irreproachable Bishop be elected for that city . . . whereby peace may be definitely established among the Catholic clergy.”¹

Damasus protests loudly to Theodosius, and in the Council Maximus is deposed, and St. Ambrose, who had been deceived by Maximus, has now not a word to say for him in the Council at Aquileia.

Here, then, we find Damasus, while leaving the Macedonian clergy free to elect a bishop for themselves, yet watching the proceedings closely, ready to exercise a higher authority if things go amiss. And this is no idiosyncrasy of Damasus, for five years later his successor, Siricius, writes that upon him “rests a greater obligation of furthering religion than rest on any other. Ours it is to sustain the burden of all the afflicted—nay, rather it is sustained in our person by the blessed Apostle Peter, who, we trust (*or* are confident, *confidimus*) guards and protects us as the heirs of his ‘administration.’”²

There is here an explicit assertion of jurisdiction, and to it, at least *when things went amiss*, the Easterns spontaneously appealed, e.g. Athanasius, St. Basil, Chrysostom, and later Ignatius of Constantinople.³

¹ “Decursis litteris dilectionis vestrae, fratres charissimi, satis sum contristatus.” . . . “Commoneo sanctitatem vestram [i.e. Acholium], ut quia cognovi dispositum esse Constantinopoli concilium fieri debere, sinceritas vestra det operam, quemadmodum praedictae civitatis episcopus eligatur, qui nullam habeat reprehensionem, ut . . . cum Catholicis sacerdotibus possit pax perpetua perdurare” (Migne, xiii. 367).

² “maior cunctis christianae religionis zelus incumbit. Portamus onera omnium qui gravantur, quin immo haec portat in nobis beatus apostolus Petrus, qui nos in omnibus, ut confidimus, *administrationis* suae protegit & tuetur heredes.” *

³ Cf. Adrian Fortescue, *The Orthodox Eastern Church*, Part I., Chap. II., sec. 2; *Appeals to Rome from the East* (C.T.S., 1907).

* Denzinger, 87, *Epist. ad Himerium Episc. Tarracon*, A.D. 385.

As for Ambrose himself, he deferred to Rome from the first. As soon as he became Bishop, Pope Damasus sent Simplicianus, a priest of the Roman Church, to be his *doctor* and *monitor*, and he became, according to Augustine, his *pater spiritualis*. We have seen Damasus summoning him to a council at Rome; and Ambrose championed Damasus manfully against Ursinus' accusations to Gratian. Again, when that Emperor was petitioned to restore the statue of Victory, Ambrose tells us: "The Memorandum of the Christian senators was sent me by holy Damasus, pastor of the Holy Roman Church, elected by ordinance of God." They had sent it in as protest, and Ambrose duly forwarded it to Gratian. It is worthy of note that he speaks of Damasus as "elected by ordinance of God," while of his own election he says: "My ordination was sanctioned by the ordinance of the western bishops."¹ A principle of discrimination that further bears out our thesis.

¹ "Misit ad me sanctus Damasus Romanæ Ecclesiæ sacerdos, judicio Dei electus, libellum quem Christiani senatores dederunt." We are aware that the decretal of Pope Damasus, quoted on p. 61, is held to be of much later date by some scholars (thus by H. H. Howorth in *Journal of Theol. Stud.*, 1913, pp. 321-337). But the *dernier mot* yet remains to be said on the subject. In any case it remains certain that Damasus believed in his primacy of jurisdiction and acted upon it; witness his sending legates to the council at Constantinople, and his other relations with the East. And this was no mere personal conviction, for Popes shortly before and after made the same claim. We have quoted above the mind of Siricius (p. 62); while in the year 340 (or 341) Pope Julius had spoken very plainly to the Eusebian Arian bishops. "Can you be ignorant," he wrote, "that this is the custom, that we should be written to first, so that from here what is just may be defined?" (*Epist. ad Antiochenos*, c. 22). Again, fifty years after Damasus, the East tacitly if not explicitly acknowledged the primacy of jurisdiction of Leo I. at the Council of Chalcedon (cf. the last chapter of Mgr. Batiffol's scholarly work *Le Siège Apostolique* (Lecoffre, Paris, 1924).

CHAPTER IV.

AMBROSE AND THEODOSIUS.

IT was in the year after the last Council of Damasus, in 382, that Gratian was murdered and Ambrose sallied forth to treat with Maximus at Treves. The pourparlers were protracted, and Ambrose was detained some months till Maximus' envoy to Justina returned with acceptable proposals. This delay was doubly precious, giving Justina time to have the Alpine passes strictly guarded, while upon reflection Maximus was content to desist from further aggression.

The youthful Emperor Valentinian was to meet a similar fate, being murdered at Vienne nine years later. With Maximus encroaching from the West, the reign opened with little glory, while Theodosius, coming to the rescue from the East, soon wholly eclipsed the personality of the little prince. Thus the great names in Roman history from 383 to 397 are Theodosius and Ambrose on the one hand, and on the other the two grim disturbers of the peace—the usurpers Maximus and Eugenius.

There is, however, one episode of young Valentinian's reign that is too significant of the times to be overlooked. Scarcely had St. Ambrose left for Gaul when the aggrieved Romans took the opportunity to appeal to Justina and her son for the re-establishment of the altar of the Goddess of Victory. The new petition was drawn up by the Prefect Symmachus, who had just succeeded to his father (of the same name). This

RELATIO SYMMACHI is a marvellous piece of pleading, and "to this day has a classical reputation as the supreme defence of expiring paganism."¹ He prudently avoids anything openly anti-Christian, speaks, in very modern fashion, of "different forms of adoring the divinity," and waxes eloquent on the traditional connection of Victory with Rome's destinies, and the legal oath taken before the "sacred Object." The Consistory called at Milan adjourned the discussion of the petition, and on his return Ambrose found the matter pending. He acted promptly, wrote to Valentinian to express his surprise that he had not been consulted on this *religious* question, and composed a refutation of the petition point by point. The climaxes of both compositions represent Rome as speaking, and after this fashion :—

FROM THE SPEECH OF
SYMMACHUS.

"Noble princes, Fathers of our land, pay regard to the long years I have been using these holy forms of ritual. I observe our ancestral ceremonial, and blush not to do so. Being free-born I follow my own manner of life. These observances have brought the whole world beneath my laws ; these holy rites repelled Hannibal from our walls and the Senones from the Capitol. Have I been spared for this, to be rebuked in my old age ? I shall consider the new institutions they propose ; but in old age reform is a thing belated and shameful.

"Let us then plead to be at peace with our country's gods, the gods who prosper all our interest in field and home. What all adore may surely be considered to be *One*. We behold the same stars,

FROM AMBROSE'S ANSWER.

"Why do ye daily shed about me the blood of innocent flocks and herds to no purpose ? The palm of victory is won not by the quivering entrails of cattle, but by the nerve and sinew of the combatants. I prostrated the world before me by quite other means. It was Camillus who fought and brought back the standards taken from the Capitol, after he had beaten the victors at the Tarpeian Rock ; thus did valour bring low those whom religious rites could not dislodge. What shall I say of Attilius, who fought to the very death ? What of Senones ? Where, pray, was Jupiter at the time ? . . . Did he speak in the cackling goose ? . . . I hate the rites of Nero. . . . I do not blush to be converted in my old age along with the whole world. Let that old age blush that cannot

¹ *St. Ambroise* (Duc de Broglie).

we live beneath one sky and in one world. What matter the particular system in which one seeks after truth? To so great a mystery there cannot be but one only road;—but this is a point for the learned and leisurely to discuss. We are here not as disputants but as suppliants.”¹

amend itself. There is no shame in passing to better things. . . . Come ye and learn a heavenly mode of warfare: here on earth we live, but our battling is in heavenly places. ‘To so great a mystery,’ he says, ‘there cannot be but one road.’ What to you is a mystery, we have learned to know by the voice of God. . . . In matters relating to God, whom should we better trust than God Himself?”² (Migne, *P.L.*, xvi. 966-982.)

Ambrose pronounced his discourse,³ twice as long as

¹ EX RELATIONE SYMMACHI.

“Optimi principes, patres patriæ, reveremini annos meos, in quos me pius ritus adduxit. Utar cerimoniis avitis; neque enim pœnitet. Vivam meo more quia libera sum. Hic cultus in leges meas orbem redegit: hæc sacra Annibalem a mœnibus, a Capitolio Senonas repulerunt. Ad hoc ergo servata sum ut longæva reprehendar? Videro quod instituendum putatur; sera tamen & contumeliosa emendatio senectutis.

“Ergo diis patriis, diis indigetibus pacem rogamus. Æquum est quidquid omnes colunt, unum putari. Eadem spectamus astra, commune cœlum est, idem nos mundus involvit. Quid interest qua quisque prudentia verum requirat? Uno itinere non potest pervenire ad tam grande secretum, —sed hæc otiosorum disputatio est, nunc preces, non certamina offerimus.”

² EX RESPONSIONE AMBROSII.

“Quid me casso quotidie gregis innoxii sanguine cruentatis? Non in fibris pecudum, sed in viribus bellatorum tropæa victoriæ sunt. Aliis ego disciplinis orbem subegi. Militabat Camillus, qui sublata Capitolio signa, cæsis Tarpeïæ rupis triumphatoribus, reportavit: stravit virtus, quos religio non removet. Quid de Attilio loquar, qui militiam etiam mortis impendit? . . . Quid de Senonibus? Ubi tunc erat Jupiter? An in ansere loquebatur? . . . Odi ritus Neronis. . . . Non erubescam cum toto orbe longæva converti. Erubescat senectus, quæ emendare se non potest. Nullus pudor est ad meliora transire. . . . Venite et discite in terris cœlestem militiam, hic vivimus & illic militamus. . . .

“Uno, inquit, non potest itinere perveniri ad tam grande secretum. Quod vos ignoratis, id nos Dei voce cognovimus. . . . Cui magis de Deo quam Deo credam?”

³ Ambrose closes with an appeal to the “Principle of Development:” “We are reproached with giving up the old ways. But does not every good thing progress to something better? The very constitution of the world obeys this law. The earth gathered into her sphere the seeds of the elements that wandered through space. . . . Then matter clothed

that of Symmachus, at a Consistory in Valentinian's presence, ending by exhorting him not to undo his brother Gratian's work, and to act up to the dictates of his faith. Ambrose's eloquence told on all the councillors, but not a word was spoken till the Emperor rose and said: "I cannot undo what my brother has done. I am told my father (Valentinian I.) did not take away the altar, so he could not restore it. And him also will I imitate in not changing anything done before our times." It was a Daniel (said Ambrose later) speaking under the Holy Spirit's influence. The petition was rejected unanimously.

This victory made Ambrose at once one of the most influential men in the West, and ill could the Arians brook it. From Sirmium there returned with Justina to Milan an Arian bishop (a Goth), who was significantly styled Auxentius after the name of Ambrose's predecessor at Milan. The Consistory was soon petitioned to grant the Arians a basilica for their services. Valentinian granted the petition without debate, apparently not caring to discriminate between Christian creeds. Ambrose, however, was adamant, and all the strength of his character was revealed that Holy Week, 385,¹ when he was in hourly expectation of being arrested, and also dreaded a popular rising in his favour.

Foiled once more, the Arians still intrigued, and a year later Ambrose was invited to meet the Arian Bishop in the Emperor's presence in consistory and

itself with the forms of beauty we still admire. . . . Day when it first appears, has never the fulness of brilliancy that will follow. . . . The earth, as the season *advances*, is decked with flowers and loaded with fruit. . . . Let those, therefore, who accuse us of running after novelties, reproach the sun because he dissipates darkness, the harvest because it takes time to come, the vintage because it ripens late. Our harvest is the souls of the faithful; the fruits of grace are the Church's vintage. . . . In these later times the Church has spread to all peoples, etc."

¹ See Cardinal Newman's brilliant account of this week in *Historical Sketches*, I., 345-352.

argue his case before non-ecclesiastical arbiters. Ambrose requested to be excused: "Quando audisti, clementissime Imperator, in causa fidei laicos de episcopo judicasse? . . . Ego in consistorio *nisi pro te stare non didici . . . palatii secreta nec novi, nec quæro.*" Ambrose despatched the letter and then addressed the assembled people from his episcopal chair in that grand discourse *De Basilicis Tradendis*, summing all up in a phrase that marked a new era: "IMPERATOR INTRA ECCLESIAM, NON SUPRA ECCLESIAM EST."

Ambrose again had conquered, and the new basilica was dedicated for the true faith amid the unmistakable enthusiasm of the people.¹

One greater than Valentinian was soon to bow in acknowledgment of the supreme rights of religion and conscience.² For Maximus, by deceitful means, obtained free passage over the Alps, Justina and Valentinian fled to Thessalonica, and thence Theodosius sallied forth to the rescue. Maximus was defeated (387) at Aquileia and executed. Valentinian was generously allowed to share in the subsequent triumph at Milan, and to hold the whole West (though hardly more than titularly, since he was still but fifteen). It was under such circumstances that Theodosius and Ambrose first met, and Theodosius was quick to recognise the Bishop's worth. Their ideals perfectly harmonised; the union of Church and Empire was to both the one solid basis for the social and moral weal of all.

Theodosius had been systematic in prohibiting not only paganism, but heresy as well throughout the East, and much had been done to the same effect in

¹ On this occasion St. Ambrose tells us he discovered and translated the bodies of Sts. Gervase and Protase.

² For all his zeal, be it noted that Ambrose discountenanced coercion of pagans or heretics, and rebuked Maximus as boldly as did St. Martin.

the West; now the new victories seemed to mean the ruin of what was still non-Catholic. Nevertheless, when Theodosius was requested, soon after, to visit Rome and hold a triumph there, and when the senators hinted how fitting it would be to restore the Statue of Victory for the occasion, Theodosius appears to have hesitated. Not so Ambrose: "Coram intimavi & in os dicere non dubitavi." (I told him my mind openly to his face.) And though he himself obtained no clear assurance from Theodosius, in the end the senators returned to Rome with the petition not granted, and the triumph when held was purely Christian. The faith never before gained so many neophytes, especially among the conscript fathers, says Prudentius (*Contra Symmachum*, lib. I., vv. 507-548).

If Theodosius now appreciated better than ever union with the Church, he had still to learn that a Christian Emperor was *in* the Church,—that he might not command a bishop (of Callinicum) to rebuild (even by way of compensation) a Jewish synagogue destroyed by Christians in a riot; and that for a great public crime even a Christian Emperor must "regulate his relations" with the Church.

Strong man as he was, Theodosius could usually control himself under great provocation—witness his clemency some years back to the Antioch rioters who had thrown down the imperial statues (the occasion of Chrysostom's great "statue" sermons). But the riot that now occurred, in 390, in Thessalonica, when his friend the governor was killed and others were butchered, roused him to uncontrollable anger. He ordered that as the whole town had sinned all should smart, and though he seems to have sent other envoys later with a mild interpretation of the order [*Ambrose*, however, says he remained obdurate *cum toties rogarem* (though I appealed to him repeatedly)], a massacre of at least 7000 persons took place—the soldiers

surrounding the circus during the games and slaughtering indiscriminately.

On the Christian—on the all-but Catholic world—the news burst like a thunderclap. The guilt rested plainly upon Theodosius,—but what was Ambrose's position? What had he, the reported confidant of the Emperor, known of the orders? What had he done to prevent their execution? His own honour was at stake, and the whole moral force of his episcopal character, and of the Church he represented.

It is at this critical juncture that all the religious and political forces we have been studying come jointly into play. On the very day the news reached Milan some bishops of Gaul came to see Ambrose. They had just returned from Rome after obtaining from Pope Siricius, successor of Damasus, the *deposition* of the bishops accused of having connived at the execution (burning alive, at the order of Maximus) of Priscillian and six of his companions for heresy.

If Siricius thought fit to depose bishops for intercourse with one who had committed murder for ostensibly religious motives, could Ambrose ignore the slaughter of a populace? Ambrose abstained from meeting Theodosius for a time, but he soon wrote him his mind. Speaking first of their long friendship, he continues: "Something has taken place at Thessalonica which is without a parallel in human memory. When the news first reached us a Council was being held with the Gallic bishops who had arrived. Everybody without exception broke out into exclamations and considered the matter very grave. No one thought you could be admitted to communion with Ambrose, and the envious would exaggerate the crime at my expense if there were no one who made it clear that a reconciliation with God must be made." ¹

¹ "Factum est in urbe Thessalonicensium quod nulla memoria habet. . . . Quando primum auditum est, propter adventum Gallorum Epis-

Theodosius hesitated long, influenced no doubt by those envious of the great churchman ; but finally he acknowledged his guilt publicly. Practical Roman as he was, Ambrose exacted, as proof of repentance, that he should issue a decree that no death sentence be carried out till a month after it had been issued.¹ Only then was Theodosius readmitted to Communion.

Thus did orthodox Christianity gradually leaven the State in Head and members. In the following year further laws were issued against paganism (particularly for application in the East), and the Temple of Serapis was destroyed at Alexandria.

Under the stress, the conservatives were goaded to one last bid for dominion. Valentinian II. was murdered the following year, and Eugenius rallied to his rebellious standard the adherents of paganism. Again the Alps were forced, and a statue of Hercules set up at the pass ; again Theodosius hastened with troops from the East ; and again the issues were decided near Aquileia. But on this occasion it was a battle royal : in the first day's fighting Theodosius' army wavered a little ; on the morrow, however, one of the enemy cohorts deserted, and so left a gap in the lines. This was instantly taken advantage of, and Eugenius was taken, almost in his tent, and slain.

Ambrose hastened from Milan to congratulate the victor, and by his advice an amnesty, as liberal as possible, was proclaimed. Great were the rejoicings in Milan and Rome, whither the Emperor soon progressed. He felt sick at heart, however, with the renewal of bloodshed recalling all the olden battles, and the exertion developed to acuteness a malady of long standing. Theodosius died the following year, and

coporum Synodus convenerat ; nemo non ingemuit, nullus mediocriter accepit : non erat facti tui absolutio in Ambrosii communione, in me etiam amplius commissi exaggeraretur invidia, si nemo diceret Dei nostri reconciliationem fore *necessariam*. . . . " (*Epist.* 51).

¹ *Cod. Theod.*, ix., 40, 13.

at Milan Ambrose preached a noble panegyric. He stressed the Emperor's general clemency and humanity, and his respect for holy Church. Significantly he represented Theodosius as coming to take his place beside Constantine in the celestial abode. For Constantine, with all his faults, had yet freed the Church from slavery, and now at the close of the century the bond of union was complete. Nay, even as with the death of this last Emperor of the whole Roman world the distant knell of state dissolution tolled, the Church had become equipped in every phase of life to brave the barbarian flood, and ultimately to take all to her own.

The good work was done, and St. Ambrose could peaceably pass away to his reward two years later (April 4th, 397). But the spirit of paganism, having lost all hope of openly overcoming Christianity, was now insidiously preparing to undermine it. Within seven years pelagianism made its appearance in East and West, and soon found in another Julian (of Eclanum), a thorough rationalist, its most strenuous defender. The idea of original sin was scouted; man could of his own free will do good and be saved, it was asserted; the teachings of Moses and of Christ were but accidental helps. But through Ambrose's great disciple, Augustine, Catholic teaching won the day, and the semi-Christian world realised all the better the wholly supernatural character of the state of grace and of the spiritual endowments of the Christian soul.¹

¹ Bardenhewer, *Geschichte der alt-kirchl. Literatur*, iv., 425 (1924, Freiburg).

CHAPTER V.

SOCIAL REFORM AND CHRISTIAN INSTITUTIONS.

IN the preceding chapters we have been mainly concerned with Popes and Emperors, with Bishops and Senators. Such characters inevitably bulk large to the eye that reviews some decades of years ; moreover, their achievements are writ large in the pages of history. But what shall we say of the men of the humbler sort, of the poor and of the slaves ? These may not be overlooked, for they or their children were often able to fight their way up to worldly or religious renown ; and particularly at this period they must arrest our attention, when the mildening touch of Christianity was bettering the lot of the slave, or even setting him free, and was bridging class distinctions ever more. If the Gospel truths were thus sinking home, it was primarily because the ministers of the Church were untiring in preaching them by their word and example ; they were the moving spirits of reform, and as such claim our attention from the outset.

Though the high Gospel *principles* are to hold good for all time, their *application* cannot but be diverse in the course of the centuries, owing to the ever-varying state of morals and general build of society. What was it to be in the period when Christianity was rising to supremacy ? Providence supplied the answer through the clear practical teaching of the Fathers of the Church, ever forthcoming to point out the need

and the duty of the hour. "There is scarce any legislative reform achieved by Constantine and his successors of which the Fathers had not pointed out the need beforehand, and very nearly proposed the measures in so many words. There is no better commentary to the Imperial Codes than the writings of the Fathers."¹

Our period is particularly rich in Saints, at once generous in heart and eloquent of speech, such as Gregory of Nyssa, Basil the Great, and Chrysostom, in the East; and Martin of Tours and Ambrose in the West. They fearlessly said their say to almost omnipotent emperors, but it would be a grievous error to esteem that they accomplished most by making sceptres tremble. Their doctrine was most frequently to the rank and file of the faithful from the pulpit, or to their chaptered clergy, and it was thus by daily instance that they leavened the thought of the crude half-pagan minds. In this way they educated the masses to appreciate, and benefit from, the new cast of legislation.

St. Ambrose, with something less than Eastern rhetoric and all a Roman's sound sense, set about fitting his clergy to play their part in this great apostolate. Paganism was becoming a thing of the past, and he determined to build on the ruins. The native sense of duty was to be worked up into Christian virtue, and selfishness done to death. For this purpose Ambrose turned to Cicero's *De Officiis* (the excellencies and shortcomings of which we have described in Part I.), and delivered many an address to his clergy on the *natural* virtues therein described; also leading their minds over to the Christian correlatives on their higher plane, where grace avails for so much. For the illustrations from pagan history and mythology, St.

¹ Paul Gide, *Etude sur la Condition de la Femme*, vol. ii.

Ambrose substituted the high deeds of patriarchs and prophets and of the defenders of Palestine, showing how well they practised the four cardinal virtues, as well as love of country and family. Indeed, they far excelled the pagans both in their conception and practice of virtue, as Ambrose sets forth at length.¹

He begins by rejecting Cicero's distinction and separate treatment of the *good* and the *useful*. Nothing can be really useful if it be not good. For God is aware of men's actions, as Ambrose eloquently proves against Epicureans, Stoics, and (narrow) Aristotelians (i. 47-56). The *media officia* are God's commandments, the *perfecta officia* are the counsels, and particularly the *beatitudo misericordiæ*, blissful Christian charity (i. 36-38).

The first duty is *modus loquendi & faciendi* (the regulating of one's words and actions), and Ambrose explains how youths, in the first place, are to acquire *decor & honestas* in speech and action. For right action the three means are the subjection of impulse to reason, method in studies, and the performance of one's duties at the proper time and in due sequence.

As for clerics, in particular, affability of manner and staid and judicious behaviour will best win them the confidence of the faithful, and enable their work to prosper. His clergy are to be men of *character*, ready to fill a position in the Church: "Good actions and an upright intention I consider the proper means for seeking to attain an honourable position, particularly in the case of an ecclesiastical office; that is to say, there should be no upstart arrogance, nor slothful negligence; neither shameful hypocrisy nor unbecoming ambition" ² (*De Officiis Ministrorum*, ii. 119).

¹ Ambrose insists that mere justice "*evacuatur*" is made void, beneficence is the Christian order of the day—"Christus venit conferre gratiam"—and the Christian should be ready very nearly to pool his goods: "*velut in medio omnes facultates ponere.*"

² "*Bonis actibus & sincero proposito nitendum ad honorem arbitror, & maxime ecclesiasticum; ut neque resupina arrogantia, vel remissa negligentia sit; neque turpis affectatio & indecora ambitio.*"

St. Ambrose would have his clergy's morals on a level with the dignity of their state, and points out that some degree of purity was already required of the Old Testament priesthood. These injunctions, touching gentle behaviour and correct morals, were only too apposite. As we have seen, churchmen rose to real dignity in public opinion during the pontificate of Damasus, and the danger of narrowing one's outlook to the comfortable days of life was very actual. The inhabitant of Rome particularly, through the great Empire's over-centralisation, had been for centuries a consummate legacy-hunter, and to this day feels that coin may be appropriated on the least pretext. And as much of the prestige of Rome attached to Milan in the time of St. Ambrose, we need not be surprised that he deals at length with avarice. His words are forcible but measured, and contrast advantageously with the utterly unsparing satire that was being poured forth just at this period at Rome (in the eighties) by St. Jerome. His gaunt ascetic person had just returned from the East, where he had imbibed the sternest monastic principles, and ill could he brook the courtly, somewhat effeminate ways of the Roman clergy. He also extolled celibacy to the extent of conceding to the married but slight chance of Heaven. St. Ambrose kept, however, to the *via media*, and his milder lesson went home. It soon took official form. To quote the *British Encyclopædia* (Siricius): "Several of the decretal letters of Siricius (successor of Pope Damasus) are extant, in which, at the request of certain groups of Western Bishops, he sets forth the rules of ecclesiastical discipline."

In January, 386, a council was held at Rome, and many principles of good living for the clergy were reaffirmed. The resolutions were forwarded to all the Bishops of Italy not present, and even to those of Africa. To these the Pope wrote :—

“ TO OUR BELOVED BRETHREN AND FELLOW-BISHOPS
OF AFRICA, SIRICIUS.

“ When we had assembled—a very great number of the Brethren—beside the relics of Saint Peter, through whom the Apostolate and the Episcopacy had their beginning in Christ, it was decided, owing to the great number of cases to be dealt with (which were in some instances not so much legal suits as mere accusations), that for the future all ecclesiastics should look into these matters. . . . We have to render an account not merely of our own conduct, but also of that of the people entrusted to us, hence it behoves us to bring home the divine principles to the ordinary faithful.” Then follow regulations for the ordination of Bishops: “ That no one presume to ordain without the sanction of the apostolic, that is, of the primatial, See.” Such as have enrolled themselves in the army after baptism are not to be accepted as clerics. This ordinance is followed by a strong exhortation to continence: “ If these regulations are kept by all with real earnestness, there will be an end to ambition, the devil will have no handle for venting his spite, etc.

“ Given at Rome at a council of eighty Bishops on the 8th, before the Ides of January, after the consulship of Arcadius Augustus and Bauto, vice-consul.”¹

¹ “ DILECTISSIMIS FRATRIBUS & CO-EPISCOPIS PER AFRICAM,
SIRICIUS.

“ Cum in unum plurimi fratres convenissemus ad Sancti Petri reliquias, per quem et Apostolatus & episcopatus in Xto cœpit exordium, placuitque propter emergentes causas plurimas, quæ in aliquantis non erant causæ sed crimina, de cetero sollicitudo esset unicuique in Ecclesia curam huiusmodi habere. . . . Non pro nobis tantum, sed pro populo credito cogimur præstare rationem; populum disciplina deifica humilem erudire debemus.”

Then follow regulations as for ordination of Bishops: “ Ut extra conscientiam sedis apostolicæ, hoc est primatis, nemo audeat ordinare.” Such as have enrolled themselves in the army after baptism, are not to be accepted as clerics. Then follows a strong exhortation to continence:—

Shortly before (or shortly after) this council, the Pope opens his mind freely to Bishop Himerus of Tarra-gona (in a letter already quoted from p. 62) :—

“As priests and deacons we are all bound by a law that is irrevocable, to devote our hearts and bodies to sobriety and chastity, so that we may be pleasing to God in all things pertaining to the daily sacrifice we offer. . . . As for those who claim some unlawful privilege as excuse . . . let them understand that they are degraded by apostolic authority from all ecclesiastical dignities.

“We desire and will that monks also—such as gravity and holy conversation and faith render commendable—be admitted to fill ecclesiastical offices.

“ . . . Let what is of general application in these regulations sent to you personally, be brought to the knowledge of all our brethren by your prompt attention, so that these ordinances, which we have drawn up with extreme care and forethought, may be kept in their integrity. . . .

“Given on the 3rd before the Ides of February, under the consuls Arcadius and Bauto.” ¹

“Hæc itaque fratres, si plena vigilantia fuerint ab omnibus observata, cessabit ambitio, locum non accipiet diabolus sæviendi, etc.

“Data Romæ in concilio Episcoporum 8o sub die 8 idus Januarias post consulatum Arcadii augusti & Bautonis v.c. cons.”

¹ “Omnes sacerdotes atque levitæ insolubili lege constringimur, ut a die ordinationis nostræ, sobrietati ac pudicitæ & corda nostra mancipemus & corpora, dummodo per omnia Deo nostro in his quæ COTIDIE offerimus sacrificiis placeamus. . . . il vero qui illiciti privilegii excusatione nituntur . . . noverint se ab omni ecclesiastico honore Apostolicæ Sedis auctoritate deiectos.

“MONACHOS quoque, quos tamen morum gravitas & vitæ ac fidei institutio sancta commendat, clericorum officiis aggregari & optamus & VOLUMUS.

“ . . . ea quæ ad te speciali nomine generaliter scripta sunt, per unanimis tuæ sollicitudinem, in universorum fratrorum nostrorum notitiam perferantur, quatenus quæ a nobis non inconsulte, sed provide cum nimia cautela & deliberatione sunt salubriter constituta intemerata permaneant, etc.

“Data tertio idus Februarias, Arcadio & Bautone consulibus.”

Thus were the clergy being proximately prepared for their work among and for the faithful, and as the arm of the law came by degrees to support them ever more, good might well be, and was, achieved in all the walks of life.

These walks of life, in many ways so different from our own, may still broadly be classed in very analogous fashion. Then, as now, society was composed of the wealthy, the middle class, and the poor. True, the poor then included the host of slaves, but according to many authorities the condition of the modern proletariat is in some respects very servitude. Then, as now, there was a "social question" clamouring for solution on general lines of justice, with due regard for the specific needs of the day. Then, as now, wealth had been concentrated in the hands of the ruling class, and had been half exhausted through warfare, maladministration, and embezzlement. As for governmental machinery, our institutions have been reeling the world over for a century, and very similar was the case in St. Ambrose's day. Then, more even than now, the middle class in Christian Europe had long been undermined by immorality, and was ignorant of, or ignored, its own possibilities for the weal or woe of the state. And this, in the case of the Roman Empire, was to prove fatal,¹ for most sober thinkers will agree

¹ "Il suffit d'ouvrir les Codes pour apercevoir les causes de cette décadence, dont rien ne donne une idée dans l'histoire de la bourgeoisie chez aucune nation moderne. C'est la misère croissante de l'Empire, conséquence d'une mauvaise organisation économique, qui l'a produite, en conduisant le législateur à confisquer la plus grande partie de la classe moyenne pour l'enchaîner à la machine gouvernementale, en faire l'instrument passif, le rouage inerte & lourd de la perception de l'impôt." "One need but open the Codes to understand the causes of this decadence, of which nothing in the history of the middle classes in any modern nation affords a parallel. It was brought about by the increasing poverty of the Empire, due to bad economic organisation, as it led the law-givers to appropriate the services of the greater part of the middle class, pressing them into the governmental machinery, making them fill the office of tax-collectors with all its drudgery and unproductiveness" (*Julien l'Apostat*, i, 203, Paul Allard).

that the backbone of a nation is constituted by the middle class, and that the sporadic feats of dynasties and demagogues mostly affect only the very surface of national life.

Individuals of the lowest class were constantly working their way up to fill the ranks of the effete middle class in the fourth century; hence we shall first examine the Church's treatment of slaves and the utterly destitute. *Evangelizare pauperibus* (to preach the Gospel to the poor) had been an express project of the Redeemer (Isaias xlix. ; Luke iv.), and His Church was true to the merciful and providential task.

The first practical means was to seek to reduce the concentration of wealth in the hands of the few. Hence the Fathers never tired, in season and out of season, in urging upon the rich the merits to be derived from alms-giving, and the real obligation they stood under of alleviating the lot of the poor. Not to give alms when one could was forcibly denounced as equivalent to theft, for "one's patrimony belongs to the brotherhood."¹ St. John Chrysostom exercised his zeal and oratory with brilliant success on this theme, before the grandees both of Antioch and of Constantinople.² He is *par excellence* the fourth-century panegyrist of alms-giving, but, East and West, preachers were ever voicing the just claims of the poor, and Ambrose was not among the least outspoken.

Addressing his clergy in his *De Officiis* (II, 15), he draws up a full programme for the exercise of charity, both by donations and by personal service, the latter being *multo frequenter splendidior* (often much more meritorious): "There are many ways of showing liberality, not only by daily feeding the poor . . . but also considering those who are ashamed to show their poverty in public, and bringing them assistance. . . .

¹ Migne, *P.G.*, lviii. 987 ; li. 300.

² Cf. *St. J. Chrys.*, by Aimé Puech, 56.

Then there is the highest degree of liberality, to ransom captives, to save men from death, and especially to reclaim women from a life of shame, to restore children to parents, parents to their children, and freemen to their country." ¹ After the Adrianople *débâcle*, he had sacrificed Church plate for the refugees.

It by no means follows, from the strong language against the selfish rich, that the Church was advocating *communism*, as some moderns would make out.² The right of private property was held inviolate in *justice*; it was but on the higher plane of most Christian charity that wealth was normally to flow to the needy. In *justice* the poor were asserted to possess a claim on certain goods, those, namely, of the Church—*Possessio Ecclesiæ sumptus est egenorum* (the possessions of the Church are the means of subsistence for the poor), as St. Ambrose clearly states. The Fathers would have been the last to incite the poor against the rich. St. Chrysostom breaks off in his invectives against the wealth of the hard-hearted to apostrophise the poor among his audience: "Weep, weep with me, not for yourselves, but for your plunderers, who are more unfortunate than you" (in Ep. 1. Tim. 12). Similarly speaks St. Augustine: "I have admonished the rich, now let the poor pay heed. Do you on the one hand give freely, but on the other hand do you refrain from stealing."³

Succour to the poor was then to come by way of personal gift from the wealthy, or more satisfactorily

¹ "Plurima genera liberalitatis sunt, non solum quotidiano sumptu egentibus . . . verum etiam his qui publice egere verecundantur, consulere ac subvenire. . . . Summa etiam liberalitas, captos redimere, subtrahere neci homines, & maxime feminas turpitudini, reddere parentibus liberos, parentes liberis, cives patriæ restituere."

² The Church regarded private ownership, not as an excellent thing in itself, but owing to the state of man since the fall, as a *sine qua non* for stabilising society.

³ "Admonui divites,—audite pauperes. Vos erogate, vos rapere nolite."

and regularly through the hands of the clergy from charitable bequests and legacies. Of Atticus of Constantinople we read, in the *History* of Socrates, "that he sent considerable sums to neighbouring towns for the poor"; while Julian the Apostate had to admit that "the impious Galileans provide food both for their own and for our poor" (ep. 44 ad Arsacium); he also reproached Antioch for the city's largesses. The Agapes still continued to alleviate the destitute, and lists of the widows and orphans were kept in the parish registers. To a generous friend we find St. Jerome writing: "You have suddenly become father of as many sons as there are poor men in Rome."¹

The Church was to go further and institute at incalculable expense a whole series of charitable establishments for the destitute and afflicted. But to appraise her generosity to the full, we must realise what rescue work for soul and body, what a rehabilitation of the pariah and the exposed maid and infant, the Church carried on untiringly.

Honour in Pagan Rome was a prerogative of the free-born. Against others no action was dishonourable. Now that the state was becoming Christianised, it united with the Church in the work of breaking down the barriers of the various classes of society, so as to hamper the practice of concubinage. Now at last the arm of the law was extended to protect maidenhood in whatever rank of society; and for the women who would help in kidnapping young girls, the penalty of having melted lead poured down their throats was decreed (*Cod. Theod.*, ix., xxiv., *de rap. virg.*). Another sign of progress was the provision that in prisons the sexes were not to be mixed, though one may well wonder that pagan Rome's great statesmen should have neglected to take so important a precaution.

¹ "Quot Romæ sunt pauperes, tot filios repente genuisti" (Migne, xxii. 641).

As for the innocent fruit of sinful indulgence, the Church from the first, in season and out of season, vindicated the *right to live* of the new-born child—nay, she would save the babe even in its ante-natal days. Juvenal had stigmatised in immortal lines the depravations of society, but his was satire for satire's sake; whereas the Fathers, a Jerome (Mig., xxii. 401), a Chrysostom, conscious of the value of human souls, could brand the sinners with infamy more intense and cut their hearers to the very heart. So in the end abortion was penalised, and to infanticide Valentinian attached the death penalty in 372.¹

Against slavery the churchmen did not proceed with a like determination. The crimes we have so far dealt with cried to heaven for vengeance, and were, moreover, imputable to the individual; while slavery was an institution more widespread than the Empire itself, and *without* slaves there seemed to be no prospect but ruin for the state. The sequel to the sudden abolition of slavery in the United States supplies an object lesson worthy to make the modern man pause, who would criticise the caution of Holy Church in this matter.² Though tolerating the institution for a time, she ever sought to better the lot of the slave and shield him from cruelty. The New Testament itself contains that masterpiece of Christian thought, of gentility, and of consummate appeal made to a rich slave-owner—St. Paul's letter to Philemon—to pardon his runaway slave, whom St. Paul was *bidding to return*. The outward subjection might continue, provided the master

¹ No *official* penalisation of the former crime has as yet been found in old Roman (or Greek) laws; as for infanticide: "*debiles mergimus*" (we drown the weaklings!) is a casual utterance of high-minded Seneca (*De Ira*, i. 15).

² "Pour agir sûrement, l'Eglise transforme les âmes avant de bouleverser les institutions" ("To proceed securely, the Church transforms the souls of men before revolutionising institutions.") (Léon l'Allemand, *Histoire de la Charité*, II.)

respected the *freedom of the soul* of the Christian personality.

Further, the Church greatly encouraged manumission, which was about the only legal principle of mercy the old laws supplied.¹ Innumerable became the instances of Christian lords and ladies setting some of, or all of, their slaves free, and providing for their subsistence. Again, the abandoned child of a slave was under Justinian pronounced free from the bonds of servitude, both as towards original father and owner and as towards those who reared the child.² By becoming *priest* or *monk* a slave became *ipso facto* free (Justinian, *Novelle* 123, 5 ; *Novelle* 5, 2).

The two greatest terrors of the slave were abolished—death by crucifixion, and, later, the branding on the forehead of those condemned to the mines : “ by which branding the human countenance, fashioned after the likeness of the Divine Beauty, ought by no means to be disfigured.”³ The young Christian convert girl became *ipso facto* free from the slavery of soul and body entailed by the stage : “ for we forbid those to be forced to resume such occupation whom a better manner of life has freed from their former calling of actresses.”⁴

Another field opened for Christian Charity as the empire's foes grew more aggressive—the redemption of the captives made in their successful raids.⁵ St. Ambrose is eloquent on the merit of saving not only

¹ Contrast the *restrictions* of manumission decreed by Augustus (see Part I., p. 20).

² As to the *selling* of children, the Church could not at once prevent it, so extreme was the poverty in the colonies through the Arian upheaval, the fatal converging of wealth on Rome and Constantinople, and through the incipient incursions of the barbarians (cf. Ambrose, *De Nabuth.*, c. v. *De Tobia*, c. viii.).

³ “ Quo facies, quæ ad similitudinem pulcritudinis cœlestis est figurata, minime maculetur ” (*Cod. Just.*, ix. 47).

⁴ “ Eas enim quas melior vivendi usus *vinculo* naturalis conditionis evoluit, retrahi vetamus ” (*Cod. Theod.*, xv. 7).

⁵ Cicero already praises this kind of generosity (*De Officiis*, ii. 16, 18).

the bodies, but the souls of the prisoners from jeopardy, even at the cost of the Church's sacred vessels (*De Officiis*, ii. 28). He had joined the action to the word; and we may also instance Bishop Acacius in the East, who in this way redeemed seven thousand Persian prisoners.¹

Thus was the Christian hand ever tending to relax the yoke of slavery, and we find in effect that during the fourth and fifth centuries a *via media* was found, and *serfdom* became a thing distinct from slavery, merely entailing residence and work on the domain.²

The moral dignity of the child and of the poorest of the poor being once asserted, the Church took practical steps to *support them all*. We have treated already of "outdoor relief"; there were to be temporary and permanent shelters as well. The poor were ministered to in the *Diaconia*, even baths being provided; while the deaconesses attended to and trained women converts unto "holy conversation." Many of the wealthy also had their private *valetudinaria*, and from the time of the Council of Nicæa we find different establishments erected to deal with the various classes of the poor and the sick. The lay hospitallers, called *parabolani*, were strictly bound to their duties, not being allowed to attend theatres (*Cod. Theod.*, xvi.)—most likely even a greater sacrifice then than now. Nor were motherly hands wanting to tend the sick. Personal service was generously rendered by noble ladies often enough; we need but mention Fabiola, St. Monica, the Empress Placilla (wife of Theodosius), and St. Pulcheria. These establishments were considered Church property—"sub potestate Episcoporum permaneat" (*Conc. Chalc.*, vii.), and were consequently free from most forms of taxation. *Monks* could hold

¹ Doellinger, *Origin of Christianity*, ii. 116.

² Paul Allard, *Origines du Servage en France*, 1913.

the management, as in the case of the great *orphantropium* in Constantinople.

To receive the youngest and most helpless, for "children in arms," there was the *Brephotropium*, an institution undreamt of by paganism. The growing child then passed on to the *Orphanotropium*, where he could learn a trade ¹ and become an honourable member of society, and doubly honourable, since the state decreed him liberty, and since the healthy environment of his youthful days was a fair pledge of his becoming a law-abiding citizen. In the *Basiliades*, hospitals founded on the model of St. Basil's, there were technical schools; ² while at the great Constantinople establishment above referred to, we find that grammar and science were taught. The Emperor would come and visit the boys, and they would sing to him.

Finally, for those whose helplessness arose from age, there was shelter in the *Gerontocomium*. The pagans had had retreats only for aged *citizens of merit*, but here again Christian charity was no respecter of persons. The spirit of all these homes we have reviewed was such that over the entrance to each the words of Theodore Studite might well have been inscribed: "Good friends who pass on the way, enter here without shame, for this dwelling is the House of God."

Of the middle class, we may say it was tending to become as corrupt and lethargic as the highest class of society; the small artisans alone were thriving. More than half the workmen, *operarii*, were now (in the fourth century) Christian, and as their faith

¹ Naudet, *Secours Publics*.

² *Regul. Basil.* (Migne, *P.G.*, xxxi. 955-958). St. Basil's "Home" initiated the development of a large new suburb to Cæsarea, about the establishment. Here, besides training for the unskilled, were provided accommodation for strangers, and medical care for the sick. The oblate-boys of his monastery were also allowed out over-day to learn a craft, if they seemed apt. They could "elect for the world" later on if they chose. (This Cæsarea is, of course, the city of that name in Cappadocia.)

rehabilitated labour, their own self-respect increased healthily. St. John Chrysostom is fond of depicting, with a touch of idealism, the Christian family-father busy at his tent-making, his tanning, or in his smithy. Magistrates, the rich, and priests are to enter that house respectfully, where virtue and poverty go hand in hand. "The least of Christian workmen," Tertullian had already said, "has a better knowledge of God's nature and perfections than Plato himself possessed."

The workman, with this new moral force within him, was consequently in his corporate life at a great advantage over members of the middle class, for these were taxed and burdened heavily. In the civil order the *curiales* were worn down with property taxes and state duties; while in commerce (transport and provisioning) one had to join a corporation, *collegium*, and so be exploited by the state. On the other hand, the corporations to which tradesmen had to be affiliated were beneficial, and protected private interests; they spread throughout the colonies, and through the shielding of Church and Bishop in the acute crises of barbarian invasions, they survived almost certainly to some extent through it all, and evolved—though doubtless with accretions—into the *medicæval guilds*. There is a very fair probability that such is the origin of at least the earliest Italian guilds (the *mercanzia* of Venice, Genoa, Milan, etc., in the tenth century). "The barbarians usually lived in the country, and left the government of the cities in the hands of the clergy, most of whom, being Italians, were naturally inclined to retain the Roman institutions. . . . All this leads to the conclusion that in most cities enough of the old Roman corporation must have been preserved to form the nucleus of a new organisation . . ." (P. J. Marique, *Cathol. Encycl.*, "Guilds"). The argument is about as strong for the south of France, and many would urge it even for Britain.

“ But whether a legacy of Roman civilisation or a native institution of the young Teutonic race, the guild would never have attained its wonderful development had not the Church taken it under its tutelage and infused into it the vivifying spirit of Christian Charity ” (*id.*, *ibid.*).

If to the episcopal rule, that was ever gaining in efficiency and scope, and to the corporate spirit of the least demoralised class of the “ old world,” we add the institution of the monasteries as centres of active industry and charity (which were developing well in East and West when St. Ambrose died), we become able to appreciate something of the *ensemble* of the good gifts Christianity conferred, first on the Old Races to save them from complete extermination when the Empire fell, and then on the New Races which, thus visited in their prime, have been saved from degeneracy almost to our day.

PART III.

CHRISTIAN RULE AT ITS BEST

(The Thirteenth Century).

THIRTEENTH CENTURY CHRONOLOGY.

(1) A CATHOLIC FEUDAL MONARCHY (1226-1270).

CHURCH.	STATE.
1198. Pope Innocent III.	1180. Philip-Augustus.
1215. Fourth Lateran Council.	1214. St. Louis born.
1216. Honorius III.	
1227. Gregory IX.	1226. Louis IX.
1227-39. SIXTH CRUSADE.	
	1241. Battle of Taillebourg ; nobles submit ; truce with Henry III.
1243. Innocent IV.	
1245. First Council of Lyons ; Frederick deposed.	
1248. SEVENTH CRUSADE.	1248. Louis in East till 1254.
1254. Alexander III.	
	1258. Treaty with England ; PROVISIONS OF OXFORD.
1261-64. Urban IV.	1264. MISE OF AMIENS ; Battle of Evesham.
1265-68. Clement IV. ; EIGHTH CRUSADE.	1270. Louis dies near Tunis ; Philip III.

(2) CATHOLIC CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT (1272-1307).

1271. Gregory X.	1272. Edward I.
1274. Second Council of Lyons.	
1276. Innocent V., Adrian V., John XXI.	
1277. Nicholas III.	1279. John Peckham, Archbishop of Canterbury.
1281. Martin IV.	
1285-87. Honorius IV.	
1288-92. Nicholas IV.	
1294. Celestine V. ; Boniface VIII.	1294. Robert of Winchelsea, Archbishop.
	1295. THE MODEL PARLIAMENT.
	1297. Charters ratified.
1300. JUBILEE YEAR.	
1303. Agnani : Benedict XI.	
1305. Clement V.	1306. " De recuperatione Terræ Sanctæ " dedicated to Edward I.
	1307. Edward I. dies.

CHAPTER I.

SAINT LOUIS AND THE PAPACY.

THE thirteenth century has already had its panegyric sung as the greatest of all,¹ and while we do not ourselves claim quite such a distinction for that period, we have reason enough, as we glance down the Christian centuries, to let our eyes be arrested by these decades. The spectacle they present is indeed striking and brilliant, even for the superficial observer, for then was the Roman Curia most powerful, then was Magna Carta signed and the English Parliament born, and then did the holy Friars Dominic and Francis gather around them disciples who were profoundly to stir the spiritual and intellectual life of many peoples, and to play their part in social problems as well. They did much for the universities of Oxford,² Cambridge, and Paris, and for those of Italy, co-ordinating the yet sparse materials of speculative theology and jurisprudence. And for the enquirer into the deeper problem of the mission, and the fulfilment of the mission, of Christianity to succour the poor and lowly, and to make the mighty more peaceful at home and abroad, the century is decidedly instructive. Altogether, this period supplies the key to many a social problem, and its kings and legists and thinkers enunciated a great number of sound principles of vital importance. These

¹ J. J. Walsh, *The Thirteenth, Greatest of Centuries* (New York, 1912).

² Cf., for instance, Father B. Jarrett, O.P., *The English Dominicans*, chaps. iii. and iv. (B., O. & Washbourne, 1921).

it is the more necessary to restate, as modern writers in their big volumes and in their little handbooks have too often ignored or misrepresented what was then far more deserving of praise than of reproach.

From the maze of events of a crowded century we can but deal with the most significant, and these, for the sake of greater cohesion and human appeal, will be grouped about two regal figures, whose days very nearly cover the hundred years, and who set their countries on the way to become "great Powers." They are Louis IX. of France and England's first Edward, "the English Justinian." We shall examine what their relations were to the Papacy and to their own peoples, and mark how much the feudal spirit waned and the modern spirit grew in their day.

The modern verdict of King Louis is that "he stands in history as the ideal king of the Middle Ages. An accomplished knight, physically strong in spite of his ascetic practices, fearless in battle, heroic in adversity, of imperious temperament, unyielding when sure of the justness of his cause, energetic and firm, he was indeed 'every inch a king.'"¹ This description is borne out by the facts, as the following pages will, it is hoped, establish; we could only quarrel with the expression "ideal king of the Middle Ages," if it were meant to suggest that his mental outlook was hemmed by "priestcraft" and "obscurantism."

The romantic years of the child-king, protected on his unstable throne by the deft statesmanship of his mother, Blanche of Castile, have inspired poet and painter² alike. For us it suffices to note that when the King was twenty-two (in 1236) the barons and kingdom were well under control; while his confidence in his mother was such that he was enabled to leave

¹ *British Encyclop.*, "Louis IX."

² E.g. the paintings of Cabanel in the Panthéon at Paris.

home politics substantially in her hands till her death sixteen years later, and to devote himself to the great international cause of the Crusades.

His first Crusade kept him in the East from 1248 till 1254, much of the time being spent in a nobly borne captivity, and concluding with the fortification of Cæsarea and Joppa. Then followed the "real age of St. Louis" in the history of France, till his resumption of the Cross in 1270, followed so shortly by his death off Tunis.

It was in the years immediately preceding each of these Crusades that the relations of Louis to the Holy See were brought to momentous issues, and these afford valuable test-points of the monarch's principles.

The Holy Roman Empire, founded when Pope Leo III. crowned Charlemain (A.D. 799/800), was one of the most striking results of the conversion of the Northern Races and has left a deep impress on European history for many centuries. It was a bold experiment in Church and state governance, whereby the German kings, upon binding themselves to defend and prosper Holy Church, received in return the coveted title of Roman Emperor and the prestige and many privileges accompanying it. At times the aid of the emperors proved invaluable for Rome, at others they tyrannised over the Church and created or supported anti-popes; but on the whole there was rather more sunshine than storm until the sixteenth century. Then the imperial dignity became more and more nominal, the character of defender of the papacy being too often ignored when not openly belied, until the Holy Roman Empire came to an end in 1805.

In our thirteenth century its collisions with Rome culminated in the twice-repeated excommunication of Frederick II. and the ruin of the Hohenstaufen. The Church had fairly reached her maximum of authority in the political world when Frederick raised

his hand against her. With his fall "the great Roman unity—a theocratic king seated beside a feudal Pontiff—broke up."¹ But though the Pope's temporal command was to wane, his spiritual dominion was to endure. And the distinction of these sways we find being made on all sides in this century, even by St. Louis himself.

The little French King had not been crowned a year when Gregory IX. excommunicated Frederick for neglecting his Crusade. Frederick did not appear to question the spiritual prerogatives of the Papacy (though it may be doubted whether he were really a Christian at all); still, he acted as he would, and as fortune favoured, in what realms he could—in Jerusalem, Rome, and Lombardy. He thought himself a Justinian, and at times won over to himself those who rated highest the pagan element of Roman law. "Italy is my inheritance," he wrote to the Pope in 1236. Such ambition rallied Lombardy, Venice, and Genoa around Gregory IX., and three years later he again excommunicated Frederick. The latter appealed hypocritically to a General Council, and was much aggrieved when one was convened to meet at Lyons in 1245.

The imperial crown was offered to Robert of Artois, brother of King Louis, but was not accepted, whether owing to the ruling of St. Louis or of his mother is uncertain. Matthew Paris (*Chronic. ad annum 1239*) would have it (*perhibetur*) that it was St. Louis, after consulting his barons, who refused and sent a rejoinder to the Pope stressing Frederick's Christian qualities.² But apart from the unlikelihood of such an attitude, there is the statement of the Chronicler Alberic that Blanche was responsible for the course taken: "de

¹ Dr. William Barry, *The Papal Monarchy*, p. 334.

² The testimony of Paris is the weaker, as he is partial to Frederick throughout.

consilio & prudentia matris, opus intactum remansit" (owing to the advice and prudence of his mother, no steps were taken) (*ad ann.* 1241).

St. Louis, in any case, would not be drawn into war against Frederick, even after Innocent IV. had deposed the Emperor at Lyons; he only had recourse to arms to save the Pope from the hands of his foe. He continued to treat Frederick as a sovereign, and thereby plainly showed he did not regard the Pope's temporal authority as divine. Pope Innocent, besides, was too mindful of his Genoese blood, and on their side the French barons were too much angered by the heavy taxation for the crusades against Turk and Emperor to favour papal politics.

Thus, despite his respect for the papacy, St. Louis had reason enough to refuse the imperial crown for his brother at this time; we understand, too, his dislike of Innocent persisting in a *rapprochement* with France by offering Sicily to Charles of Anjou in 1254, when Manfred was triumphing. Similarly, Urban IV. offered the crown of Naples to St. Louis himself seven years later, and similarly with steady disinterestedness Louis was content to point out that others had more right thereto. Then Rome's appeal went out a second time to Charles of Anjou, and this time St. Louis raised little objection, thinking, maybe, that in this way Manfred's Saracen troops, Mameluks, could best be cleared out of Italy. But reluctant the French king was, and no blame can attach to him for the enterprise, ruthlessly begun with Conradin's execution, and more ruthlessly undone (so far as Sicily was concerned) at the Sicilian Vespers in 1282, when every foreigner in the isle was slaughtered. This crown was the last conferred according to the old feudal principle of papal suzerainty (with an oath of fidelity like that King John had taken). This separation of Naples from the Empire was of immediate benefit, in so far as

the Empire became more exclusively Teutonic and Transalpine, and so hampered the Church far less ; but the call upon France was to result in a few decades in the Avignon captivity.

St. Louis had played consistently the part of mediator throughout. Saint as he was, he could not waver a moment from adhering to the magnetic centre of Christianity in the Papacy ; but he would not take the law from the Pope as from a temporal overlord. St. Louis was the one impartial monarch of that age, and Paris was often resorted to as a final court of arbitration, second only to Rome.¹ Mediæval times were drawing to a close, and gradually Rome's appeal would be less to statesman and politician than to the souls of men.

¹ Cf. p. 107.

CHAPTER II.

SAINT LOUIS AND THE GOVERNANCE OF HIS REALM.

It will be doubly useful to survey what "the most Christian King" achieved for his country; for thus we shall be able to form a fair idea of his conception of regal power, and then profitably contrast it with the policy of Edward I. and the public feeling in England to the end of the century. Historical sequence in our narrative will be also doubly secured, for Edward I. became king some twenty months after St. Louis died, and reigned till 1307. His realm being further removed from the centre of the Old World, could the more easily rise up against feudalism, stress the dignity of the mere citizen, and distinguish more clearly the *rôles* of Church and state.

The development of national spirit progressed greatly in this century, as against the narrow outlook of the feudal baron and his retainers. The crusades, by uniting Christians of all lands into mighty, and at times even concordant forces, helped to make these ambitions shrink very small, and brought men to realise as never before that anyone who in those vast hosts spoke their own tongue was entitled to be treated as friend and brother. Of the most martial and ambitious of barons, many sallied forth to return no more; while modest burgesses and tradesmen could steadily improve their station—at home by providing all things needful for the great armies' upkeep, and abroad by

commercial enterprise with this wonderful land of the East. All of which tendencies came to a head in the scheme, of which we shall speak later, for an *international colonisation of Palestine*.¹

By the time St. Louis came to manhood the most restless and formidable of the barons had been quelled, and peace held the land ; a peace the king was the more inclined to strive to maintain, because of the deep impression made on his young mind by witnessing and hearing so much of lands ravaged, cities burnt, and the undoing, by fair means and foul, of noble lords and ladies. His mother's stern wielding of the sceptre had broken what would not bend, and now the kind nobility of the son and his almost scrupulous sense of righteousness made the yoke light. He had no favourite at court, and this at once excluded the wiles of diplomacy that ended so often in those centuries in conspiracies and rioting, if not in subversion of the very throne.

As private guests at his table, Louis invited renowned doctors and scholars, and this may have been often enough, for " he seldom ate in company of the barons." ² Among the former came Robert of Sorbonne, who laid the modest foundations of what soon became the foremost college in Paris, and whom Louis so esteemed as to appoint him his confessor. St. Thomas Aquinas sat and discoursed at the royal table, and the king also conversed frequently with St. Bonaventure ; for St. Louis warmly patronised the new Orders of St. Francis and St. Dominic, both for the brilliant and practical turn of their theology, and because he saw in them the best defenders of true religion and of morality itself against the licence and nihilism of the Albigenses, who were the Mormons of that time. He consulted St. Thomas on the weightiest matters of state, and his esteem for the two orders continued till the last, for

¹ See p. 121.

² Perry, *St. Louis*, p. 274.

in his testament he desired his two sons, born while he was overseas, to be brought up at Paris, the one in a house of the Dominicans and the other with the Franciscans. This predilection was no little grievance to the secular doctors and to the monks of more ancient, of Benedictine, lineage, and was to create trouble.

This vexation was betrayed very clearly by Matthew Paris, who complains of, and criticises the new Orders at every opportunity, and thus (as through his partiality for Frederick II.) unfortunately lowers the value of his monumental records. But the zeal of the newcomers also served to rouse a healthy emulation among the other religious and secular clergy, witness Abbot Estienne of Clairvaux, who founded the *Collège des Bernardins* at Paris in 1246, to train up his religious on a par with Dominicans and Franciscans; and Carmelites, Augustinians, and Carthusians followed suit. Only four years later Robert de Sorbonne opened his college for the secular clergy; and in England the same causes led to a similar revival at Oxford.

It was almost inevitable that competition among so many keen spirits should lead to friction. At Paris matters came to a head in 1254, when the Dominicans were excluded from the University by the "old style" professional staff. It required two years of negotiations, wherein Pope, and King, and St. Thomas Aquinas brought their full powers into play, to vindicate the Dominicans and the Mendicant Orders in general.

In this revival of study, the science of law profited at least equally with less technical subjects. At Bologna there were some ten thousand scholars in 1262, it is said, and its speciality for law was appreciated throughout the West. Here studied Dante, whose *De monarchia* shows he could grapple with the problems of Papal and Imperial rule; and here lectured St. Thomas Aquinas, and many of their great contemporaries. Based, as it was, substantially on Roman

law, the canon law of the Church had preserved the great Roman principles safe through the ruin of its Empire ; and, indeed, churchmen had held the administration of justice to no little extent in their hands till the Barbarians, Franks, Saxons, Visigoths, and Lombards had settled for some centuries in the West. These had rough and ready principles of government of their own, but to mitigate their cruelty, to civilise and Christianise them, was an apostolic labour of love pursued unwearingly through the long " dark ages."

It is in our thirteenth century that the new peoples first enunciated definite legislation for themselves, at once original and Christian in character. Then it is that Magna Carta is drawn up ; then, too, the great *Mirrors* of Swabia and Saxony are written ; and in France we have the *Common Law* of Pierre de Fontaines, the " Statutes of Beauvoisis," by Philip of Beaumanoir, as also the private *coutumier*, drawn up before 1273, that goes by the name of " Etablissements de St. Louis."

Deeply religious as St. Louis was, the rights of religion and of the clergy in their own sphere were paramount in his eyes ; and he was often ready to further the cause of sound doctrine by force of arms, when conciliation was impossible. Still, where the spiritual and temporal met, in matters of estates or criminal causes, he and his ministers could assert the prerogatives of the crown, and insisted on adjudicating such causes in the high court of appeal he had established. His masculine mother had let no nomination to benefices slip from the royal gift ; prelates more than once resorted to excommunication, and the deadlock would be ended only after a papal appeal. We may instance the quarrels of the crown with Archbishop Maurice of Rouen, and with Bishop Milo of Beauvais.

Nevertheless, the clergy on the whole realised what a pledge of peace in the realm a strong monarchy

afforded, and the "most Christian King" could count on the ecclesiastics who held lands from him, equally well as on the barons of his kin. Upon its higher plane ecclesiastical polity pursued a general course very similar to that of the state; so similar and harmonious on the whole that the jurisdiction of the two tended to coalesce. At this period, perhaps, the closest approximation was made to what we may suggest to be the ideal—steady power in the Church honoured by the state, and likewise steady power in the state honoured by the Church. In later centuries in proportion as the prestige of the nobles paled before the greater power of kings, these became the proner to pay less respect to churchmen; a movement which culminated in the sixteenth century absolutism of the crown and the theory of the divine right of kings.

Putting a check, as he ever did, on the unhealthy craving for national aggrandisement at the expense of justice, St. Louis found it ever easy to come to an understanding with aggrieved churchmen which was honourable for all concerned. With their politics, even with that of Popes, he hesitated not to express strong disapproval at times; while, on the other hand, he was open to papal admonitions, e.g. when Clement IV. counselled him to punish blasphemers less severely. Again, the lengthy memorandum wherein some bishops and other French clergy complained of papal taxations, preferment of Italians, etc., was seconded by Marshal Ferri Pasté in the name of St. Louis.¹

Consequently the nobles, though chafing at times at the royal scruples, could rest confident that he would

¹ The text is given in *Matt. Paris*. It deals with real abuses, and so this accounts for Louis IX.'s attitude. It is quite otherwise, however, with the "Pragmatic Sanction" foisted on the Saint by Gallicans; its tenor is quite unlike anything that is surely the King's, and it is the more suspicious as it is first heard of in Charles VIII.'s reign, and first produced in full by his astute son, Louis XI. It is now generally held a forgery.

sufficiently safeguard the rights and dignities of the realm. The king worked quietly, adding ever and anon some town or estate to France each time some just cause (marriage or death) was forthcoming. There was probably but one serious case of dissatisfaction among the nobles on account of his policy, namely, when he made his peace treaty with Henry III. of England.¹

In the *crown* estates he had true justice administered, taking pains to seek out a man of the highest integrity for the Paris provostship,—and finding him in Estienne Boileaux. The king would often come and sit beside him on the tribunal, says Joinville, to encourage other magistrates to judge with like impartiality. Indeed, as soon as he returned from Palestine, he ordered all judges to swear publicly that they would render true justice, and neither take gifts from those connected with them in office, nor borrow ought from any likely to bring up lawsuits in their competency. Levying of taxes was reorganised, and the arbitrary duties imposed on merchandise by those who farmed the taxes were reduced. All merchants and artisans were grouped into confraternities, of which more must be said in a later chapter; while the King's generosity for furthering study and for the relief of the poor was unstinted. To satisfy himself that all was well, the King was ever progressing about his realm, and the records show he undertook as many as forty such journeys, on the average, every year.

In the estates which the nobles held of him *in fief*, the King could not bring his influence for the good to bear so directly. But in his day the Parliament of France, a meeting of the great persons of the kingdom (royal estates), “began to be regularly convoked at Paris three or four times a year; . . . secretaries and

¹ See Chapter III.

privy councillors of the Crown sat by the side of prelates and barons . . . and, as judicial business increased over the rest and sittings were multiplied and prolonged, the magnates, lay and ecclesiastic, withdrew or were no longer summoned, except on special occasions. The lawyers were left in possession, and Parliament started to become the supreme court of justice in France . . . and the right was asserted to *hear appeals from courts of vassals*." ¹ This claim was strengthened by Louis's prestige, and by his interdiction of private warrings among the barons, and of trial by combat (1260). Eleven years previously resort to arms for such purpose had been denounced by Pope Innocent IV. Thus did the state again join hands with the Church to promote true civilisation in the royal domain, and even tend to extend it through the whole of France.

Such obsequious following of the voice of Mother Church as of Mother Church (i.e. as distinct from papal utterances on political expediency in Italy) give us the key to St. Louis's success in his work of reform. For all such work peace is an indispensable premise, and, as has been well said but not enough understood: "The attempts of the Church in the Middle Ages to restrain war, to limit its legitimate occasions, its motives, its duration (e.g. by the 'Truce of God'), illustrate those ideals of mediæval life to which at length the world is gradually returning, and without which the European character must deteriorate." ²

There was the spirit of such benignity in St. Louis's dealings with his fellow-kings, as we shall witness in his relations with Henry III. of England.

¹ Frederick Perry, *St. Louis* (1901), p. 248.

² J. E. Winstanley Wallis, *The Sword of Justice* (Oxford, 1920), p. 99.

CHAPTER III.

LOUIS OF FRANCE AND HENRY OF ENGLAND (1226-1270).

THE Norman link that had already connected England and France for nearly two centuries had been forged by neither realm. It was one of the last achievements of the roving spirit that had led the Barbarians during six centuries to trample Western Europe under foot. The establishment of Rollo's men in Northern France, in Normandy, gashed the side of that fair country, though soon enough the dukes became nominal vassals of the French kings. But when the great William had prostrated the might of England, two things followed. The new kings of England grew yet more unwilling to acknowledge the rights of their French overlord, and the English, smarting under the new iron yoke, cursed all the French for what was the remnant of Norman ferocity. The French became similarly aggrieved when Norman Dukes began to march the sturdy yeomen of England against them ; while the inter-marriage of Anglo-Norman and French nobility led to the unnatural severance of provinces or estates from these realms to become the property of an oversea lord.

Thus it came about in the time of St. Louis that, though Philip Augustus had wrested the whole of Normandy from luckless King John, the latter's successor, Henry III., still held Aquitaine and other important territories of France. He early put in a

claim to Normandy, effected a landing at St. Malo, in 1230, and after marching his army to no great purpose down south to Gascony and then back to Nantes, fell sick and returned to England. Next year the French marched against Brittany, but with indifferent success. "The Pope was exhorting both sides to peace, having ordered the Archbishop of Sens in France and the Bishop of Winchester in England to work to that end." A truce was made in July for three years, and subsequently extended.¹

Eleven years later Henry again crossed over to France with great sums of money to support an army in Aquitaine, and thence proceed to reconquer his lost provinces. But the French King took vigorous measures against his own barons, who were siding with the English, and Henry's men were defeated at Taillebourg.² Henry himself might have been taken had not the French King consented to an armistice, proposed by Richard of Cornwall. Partly owing to the high esteem in which he was held by the French (for having assisted in freeing their captives in Palestine), and partly because the next day was a Sunday, one day's truce was granted. Truly a Christian understanding this.³ Henry took the opportunity to retreat

¹ Peter of Brittany submitted to France in 1234, whereupon his earldom of Richmond was confiscated. In revenge, his vessels plundered English merchants, and now the English no longer called him a noble Earl, but a villanous pirate.

² The French rebels seem to have been handicapped on this occasion by feudal "etiquette," which prevented nobles from directly encountering their overlord in battle.—According to Joinville it was the personal bravery of St. Louis that carried the day against great odds.

³ The Truce of God was devised to lessen the ruthless warrings of barons in the days when feudalism was decaying. "A council of Elne in 1207, in a canon concerning the sanctification of the Sunday, forbade hostilities from Saturday night till Monday morning. . . . This prohibition was subsequently extended to Thursday (in memory of the Ascension), Friday (in memory of the Passion of Christ), and to Saturday, the day of the Resurrection (*sic!*) Still another step included Advent and Lent in the Truce. . . . The Truce soon spread from France to Italy and Germany. The Œcumenical Council of 1179 extended

with all speed to Saintes, and soon after with even more precipitation to Blaye-en-Garonne, and thence to Bordeaux. Hugh de la Marche and many other refractory nobles submitted to the French King, whose realm was now strengthened as never before. A truce was made with Henry in August (Henry to pay £1000 yearly), and a year later Raymond of Toulouse submitted, ceding Narbonne and some castles to Louis.

"The house of Plantagenet was now definitely ranked as a foreign power," and shortly after the cleavage was made yet more complete by St. Louis, who enacted that "all who held fiefs both in France and England must resign either the one or the other."¹

Henry took advantage of St. Louis's crusade to the East to press his claims and grievances; but want of energy prevented him from taking up arms, as also the increasing disaffection of his barons, and a threat from the Pope to place England under interdict if such attempt were made.

On his return home in 1254 the French King dealt generously with Henry, acceded to his request to be permitted to return to England through France (from Gascony), and gave him a royal reception in the capital. Steps were taken to conclude a definite treaty, and this was done in 1258. Louis was generous in restoring some provinces (chiefly Périgord and Limousin) to Henry, while the latter definitely renounced all claim to Normandy, and promised to pay homage for Gascony and Guienne. The treaty was equally the subject of complaint with the English as with the French nobility, and this is a fair proof of

the institution to the whole Church (Canon XXI., "De Treugis servandis"). . . . Gradually the public authorities, royalty, the leagues between nobles (Landfrieden), and the communes followed the impulse, and finally restricted war to international conflicts (Ch. Moeller in *Cathol. Encyclopædia*, "Truce of God").

¹ Perry, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

the equity of the compromise. Thus Louis conjured away all peril from the north, and became overlord from Flanders to the Pyrenees. As to the surrender of so much land north of Gascony, Louis said : " I do it to make love between my children and his (Henry's), who are first cousins. It is fitting, therefore, that there should be peace between them." In 1259 Henry paid homage for Guienne, and spent Christmas at Paris. Thus did Louis achieve all that was humanly possible to avert the calamity of the Hundred Years' War. And further evidence of a good understanding between the countries was yet to follow.

The " misrule of Henry III." is so notorious that it needs no detailing here. He was religious-minded enough¹ and generous to the poor, but was totally lacking in statesmanship and tact. The nobles became at the last exasperated, particularly with his excessive taxation and predilection for foreigners, and at the very time the treaty of Paris was ratified (1258) they approached Louis to obtain his adhesion, or at least his neutrality.

St. Louis was becoming in fact " the justice of the peace of Western Europe." He mediated successfully between " the Count of Chalons and the Count of Burgundy ; between the Kings of England and Navarre ; between the latter and the Count of Chalons ; between the Counts of Bar and Luxemburg ; and in each case the predatory war that had already started was stopped,"² and the king's decision held good. We hear also of Gascons, of merchants of Arragon, of people of Burgundy and Lorraine (as Joinville states), who appealed to Louis for justice.

The Provisions of Oxford were passed in the same

¹ Henry was intimate with Matthew Paris, supplying him with many particulars for insertion in the great *Chronicle*. The monk admired his truly royal liberality.

² Perry, *op. cit.*, p. 242.

year, 1258, whereby the nobles drew to themselves the power of government (vesting it in a council of fifteen). Henry, on his return, repudiated the provisions, and recourse was had to arms. The baronial scheme "demanded more than had ever been suggested by the most free interpretation of the great Charter," to quote Professor Tout.¹ The same writer proceeds to assert "the *absolute* freedom of the whole movement from any suspicion of the separatist tendencies of the earlier feudalism. The barons *tacitly* accepted the principle that England was an unity, and that it must be ruled as a single whole." In the next sentence what was "tacit" receives higher colouring: "The most feudal class of the community thus *frankly abandoned* the ancient baronial contention that each baron should rule in isolation over his own estates." It seems hard to credit: (1) that the barons can have seriously contemplated such a sacrifice as individuals; (2) that feudal separatism as an institution should lapse thus suddenly, particularly when we consider how deep-rooted it still was throughout the Wars of the Roses, until the dramatic stand and fall of the "Last of the Barons" two centuries later. Feuds did, in fact, break out between the barons as early as within the next two years, and it was only Henry's repudiation of the Provisions of Oxford that rallied the nobles, towards the close of 1260, around Simon de Montfort. Now, however, a new Royalist party grew up, of which Prince Edward was the soul, based on principles we shall presently investigate. Suffice it to say that many barons "seceded" to the royal standard in 1263, and that after a short series of successes the barons were glad to submit their case to the ruling of St. Louis, in December, 1263.

The court was held at Amiens in January following.

¹ *Political Hist. of England*, ii. 101.

Henry and his queen and the Archbishop of Canterbury were present, as also many barons. After considering the arguments on both sides at length, Louis issued his verdict, in a document called "The Mise of Amiens." It was confirmatory of the Pope's condemnation of the Provisions two years before, and pronounced them null and void. Henry was to enjoy anew his royal prerogatives; but, on the other hand, previous English charters and liberties were to be respected by him.

St. Louis certainly could not agree to the practice of "limiting royal authority by a baronial committee," barons being then what they were; and maybe the very theory seemed to him to run counter to the idea of monarchy. One cannot in justice expect Louis could have found out the *via media* of balancing royal and baronial power through a people's party. It was morally impossible that the baron's scheme could work smoothly, i.e. without bloodshed.

The barons, indeed, refused to submit to the verdict. Next year the battle of Lewes was fought and won by Simon de Montfort, into whose hands the King and Prince Edward fell. Simon then had the opportunity for trying to realise *his* conception of Parliament, which was not that of the Provisions of Oxford. He took a momentous step, but one that was quite consistent with the development of English governance from of old. For he convened to the great Parliament of 1265, besides two knights from every shire, two representatives from every city and borough, by writs sent directly to the latter, and welded them into one assembly. Thus the ordinary citizen could be made to count as against the hostility or indifference of the magnates. There was here a principle of control over the nobles that had not been brought to the cognisance of St. Louis. But the attempt was too idealistic, though Prince Edward came over to Simon's side.

De Montfort was slain that very year at Evesham, and Henry triumphed.

Throughout Louis did not "relax his efforts for peace, nor withhold his protection from either side in its hour of disaster. He assisted the fugitive English Queen, and, after the defeat of the reformers, won pardon from Henry on easy terms for the widow and sons of Simon de Montfort."¹ To the sequel of Simon's exertions for England and holy Church we now turn, to witness the dawn of Catholic liberalism.

¹ Perry, *op. cit.*, p. 245.

CHAPTER IV.

EDWARD I. AND LIBERAL GOVERNANCE (1272-1307).

"SAINT LOUIS embodied and energised almost at monarchy's beginning those elements in the kingly system on which its essential life depended; the elements, that is, of order and justice. He left at once a model to his successors and a convincing example to the remembrance of his subjects of the benefits conferred by the sway of a righteous king." ¹ But even as the absolute monarch, if good, could make the state, so could an evil one mar it. England had bitter experience of this throughout the reign of Henry III., and gathered up, in these days when absolute monarchy attained its fairest realisation in France, the customs and sparse and all-but-forgotten precedents tending to the liberty of the third estate, and fashioned them tentatively into a vital thing, a representative Parliament, to control the king's hand in taxation, and make the people's complaints sound in his ears.

Scarce had the barons' rising been quelled when news reached Europe that "the Egyptians were seizing in Palestine whatever had escaped the Mongol ravages." ² St. Louis desired to strike again for the liberation of Palestine, and, receiving some encouragement from Clement IV., took the Cross himself in full parliament in the Lent of 1267. His example was followed by the Kings of Navarre and Arragon and by Prince Edward

¹ Perry, *op. cit.*, p. 295.

² Barry, *The Papal Monarchy*, p. 388.

of England. The expedition did not sail till 1270, Louis then making for Tunis. A landing was effected, but the army was seized with the plague eight days later; even the marshals were stricken down, and so too the King himself. With one last plaint: "Jerusalem! Oh, Jerusalem!" the Saint passed away.

At the moment he expired, the King of Sicily's fleet was entering the bay (between Tunis and *quondam* Carthage), and Edward of England soon arrived with further reinforcements. But the spirit of the enterprise was broken, and peace was made with the Sultan. Edward alone protested, and then sailed for Acre with his own personal following. Here he battled for more than a year, on one occasion storming Nazareth and putting all the Turks there to the sword. His father's declining health made him quit Palestine in August, 1272, and he was in Sicily when the news of Henry III.'s death in November reached him. He returned slowly, spent a year in Gascony (for which he did homage to Philip III.), and only reached England in August, 1274, when he was crowned at Westminster.

He at once set to work to reform and strengthen the national administration, and we must not overlook the fact that in this he derived much assistance from his chancellor, Robert Burnell, Bishop of Bath and Wells. From 1275 to 1290 nearly every year was marked by an important law. Few of these contained anything very new or original. But the steady purpose behind them all was to eliminate feudalism from political life, and the results of his "conservative" legislation was almost revolutionary.¹ The stern schooling of his

¹ Baronial immunities were strictly inquired into, and embodied in the "Hundred Rolls." But Edward found it prudent not to press his claims, now that the evidence he had collected made further growth of franchises impossible. "In this lies the whole essence of Edward's policy in relation to feudalism, a policy very similar to that of St. Louis. Every man is to have his own, and the king is not to inquire too curiously. . . . But no extension of any private right was to be tolerated" (Prof.

youth made Edward realise that in a close alliance with his people lay the best means of consolidating the power of the crown.

This "liberalism" towards the third estate was then, at bottom, utilitarian. He had not that sympathy for the common folk later displayed by Henry IV. of France, and it is to the stress of circumstances and to years really critical that England owes the convocation of that "Model Parliament," the type of which was to be perpetuated in all subsequent ones. For in the early nineties Edward was tricked out of Gascony by Philip the Fair; Wales rose in revolt, and Scotland was resenting Edward's enforced suzerainty. The King determined to take up arms. "What touches all," ran the writ of summons, for a parliament he needs must call, "should be approved by all, and common dangers met by measures agreed in common." Two knights of every shire and two burgesses from every borough were summoned, besides a full and representative gathering of the magnates. There was danger of a French invasion, and the three estates, deliberating separately, voted for the national defence, the barons and knights (the Lords) an eleventh; the boroughs (Commons) a seventh; and the clergy (Convocation) a tenth.

Edward, in this critical military situation, greatly chafed at not having succeeded in obtaining more from the clergy, and his anger was extreme when, two years later, acting upon the new bull, *Clericis laicos* (1295), the clergy refused to vote any supplies. Of the relation of Church and state we shall deal later; here we need but note that from this time Edward strained every nerve to equip an adequate army for foreign service, and proceeded recklessly.

Tout, *History of England from Accession of Henry III. to Death of Edward III.*, being Vol. II. of *The Political History of England*, Longmans, 1905, p. 149).

From the merchants wool and hides were seized, and vast stores of provisions were requisitioned all over the country. The barons had been smarting all along at their loss of prestige ; Norfolk now refused in baronial parliament to follow Edward to fight in Gascony ; and the aristocrats were joined by the people of the land, seeing that the rights of the Great Charter were in imminent peril.

Two days before Edward left for Flanders, Norfolk and Hereford appeared in arms at Westminster, and forbade further collection of supplies till the Great Charter (and Charter of the Forest) had been confirmed. In the following month (September, 1297) Wallace won the battle of Stirling Bridge and, driving the English out of Scotland, raided the three northern counties of England. The distracted regency summoned the three estates to a new Parliament, but the leaders of the opposition came armed, and refused all aid till the charters were confirmed, also presenting a petition that henceforth no tallage or aid be taken in future without the assent of the estates. The regency confirmed the charters in October, and the King ratified them at Ghent shortly after ; clauses being added (less general than in the baronial request) that aids like those recently extorted should not be imposed in future without the consent of all the realm.

But the confirmation of charters in itself, to quote Professor Tout,¹ " is with good reason reckoned as one of the turning points in the history of our constitution. . . . Edward had been willing to take the people into partnership with him when he thought they would be passive partners, anxious to do his pleasure. He was, now, taught that the leaders of the people were henceforth to have their share with the crown in determining national policy. Common dangers were still to be met

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 209.

by measures deliberated in common, but the initiative was no longer exclusively reserved to the monarch."

By such progress of national liberties it came about that while in France despotic monarchy could only be broken after the financial ruin of the country in 1789, in England a despotic monarch was brought to the block some hundred and fifty years sooner, and his little less despotic son (James II.) expelled the country. So fitted had the nation become to bear its destinies in its own hands, starting from an initiative in Catholic days.

CHAPTER V.

EDWARD I. AND ROME.¹

As the thirteenth century drew to a close the political power of the papacy manifestly waned, but not in every country with the same dramatic suddenness. In Italy a last stand was being made for all the mediæval prerogatives by Pope Boniface VIII., the embodiment of "Canon Law," as against the now resurrect "Roman Law" of purely secular government in matters secular *et in quibusdam aliis*. The most notorious antagonist of the "Catholic claims" was Philip the Fair, grandson of St. Louis. In 1287 he had ordained that seculars alone could be provosts, bailiffs, or officers of justice, and now, in 1296, to equip himself against the martial activities of Edward I. above-mentioned, he set to taxing the estates of the Church. Boniface then published his Bull, "Clericis Laicos," threatening with anathema all who exacted or who paid taxes on Church property. A compromise was effected in the following year, however, and St. Louis was canonised "by way of splendid peace-offering."² Boniface then proclaimed the great Jubilee of 1300. It was "splendid and triumphant,—but it was a vision and a farewell."³

¹ The relations of Henry III. with Rome have been ably worked out by Cardinal Gasquet (*Henry III. and the Church*, Bell, 1905). The principles laid down in the preface are most valuable. As we shall point out in Part IV., Chapter I., *feudalism* was mainly responsible for the lack of perfect harmony between London and Rome. The spiritual supremacy of the Pope, far from being questioned, was explicitly acknowledged time and again throughout the century, and by none more clearly than by Grosseteste (*Epist.*, 145).

² *The Papal Monarchy*, pp. 406, 409.

³ *Ibid.*

Within three years the Pope was crushed by Nogaret ; through him Philip, King of France, as Dante weeps to record, had inflicted a second time the Passion of Christ on His Vicar.¹ And this humiliation was but the prelude to the seventy years' "Captivity" at Avignon. Despite appearances, however, it would be incorrect to describe the situation as that of the "Church within the State," for French kings never claimed to be Supreme Head of the Church.

The "divine right of kings" was, indeed, a phrase coming into vogue, but the extension of such "right" to the domain of theology, of faith and morals, was so unnatural a perversion that it had to await its first teacher *ex professo* till Martin Luther's day. This day unhappily synchronised with that of Henry VIII., and that an English king should have advocated the principle is doubly unnatural, for this country had been ever not only far less "Gallican" in its episcopacy than France,² but also less "supreme," and even less ambitious in its sovereignty. This latter point is exactly the one we become competent to deal with, by investigating the relations of Edward the First with the Holy See.

For, as we have seen, it was in his reign that the monarchy, though heightening its prestige as against the barons, became "limited" as against the joint representatives of the three estates, who now formed

¹ *Purg.*, xx. 85 :—

"Veggio in Alagna entrar lo fiordaliso,
E nel Vicario suo Cristo esser catto," etc.

² Cf. the "epoch-making articles of Professor Maitland in *English Historical Review* for 1896 and 1897 on 'Canon Law in England.' Ecclesiastical law, he has proved, in this country as in the rest of Europe, was not archiepiscopal law, but Papal law. The *Corpus Iuris Canonici* is largely made up of decisions given in answer to appeals for guidance submitted by English Bishops. 'A surprisingly large number of the cases which evoke case law from these two mitred lawyers (Alex. III. and Innoc. III.) are English cases' (Fr. Thurston, *Life of St. Hugh of Lincoln*, pp. 337-338).

the definite parliamentary body. Thereby, and by the mere operation of a liberal political principle, "no taxation without representation" (to be championed later in the United States), the clergy were assured of a stable status in the Constitution of modern England and of a dignified measure of authority,¹ consequent upon their power to withhold contributions.

This immunity was not preserved without much contest, heightened on the one hand by Edward's imperious character and great military straits, and on the other by papal attitude such as that of Pope Boniface the Eighth. However, the law-givers had insight enough to realise in the end that wealth and estates bequeathed by citizens for the good of religion might not well be assessed by the common tax-collector. This Pontiff found valuable lieutenants till the century's close in the Archbishops of Canterbury: the Franciscan John Peckham² (1279-1292), and Robert of Winchelsea (1294-1305). Both may have acted at times with indiscreet zeal, even as did Pope Boniface, but as Edward was also liable to exceed the bounds of moderation, the contest was even, and ultimately solved (in so far as vital questions of the kind are capable of solution) so as to maintain the dignity of both Church and state.

Thus John Peckham, in defending Church privileges, at length brought the imperious Edward to meet him halfway ; while no little degree of the national benefits

¹ The clergy in Convocation, as one of the three estates, preserved the "honourable privilege of taxing themselves" till 1665. Of the almost trivial manner it was then lost, and of the consequent lapsing of the clergy from all political and even ecclesiastical power, let others tell. Cf. Lingard, *History of Eng.*, vii. 276 : Convocation "was no longer suffered to deliberate, to frame ecclesiastical canons, or to investigate the conduct, or regulate the concerns, of the Church." Also Burnet, i. 340 ; iv. 508.

² Peckham, be it noted, ordained that in all cathedrals and collegiate churches a copy of Magna Carta should be placed, much to the King's chagrin.

attained by Edward's ratification of the Charters in 1297 goes to the credit of Robert of Winchelsea. True, Edward obtained his recall by the facile Clement V. (a Gascon subject of his, and a *protégé* of Philip the Fair) on his accession in 1305, but the good work had been done and was definitely clenched till the days of the Reformation.¹

It is true that issues pending from "mixed jurisdiction" ² were still to afford matter for contention often enough—as, for instance, the question of right of sanctuary and of the passing to the Church of lands in mortmain, and, above all, the conferring of important English benefices by the Pope on foreigners; but ecclesiastic jurisdiction in its own sphere remained inviolate. The Parliaments of Edward III. may, indeed, have framed "antipapal legislation" (e.g. the Statutes of Provisors and of *Præmunire*), but this by no means aimed at trenching upon the deposit of faith or at imposing restrictions on the "dispensers of the mysteries of God" (1 Cor. iv.) *qua tales*. English Archbishops might be proceeded against by the Crown, for some legal point beside the faith, they might be threatened—aye, in one instance done to death—but in these cases it was for the sake of the earthly gain involved, or out of personal hatred for the *man* who bore the crosier. The kings, the men, of England had no stomach for *heresy* (for Lollards and Wicliffites sink into insignificance in comparison with the Albigensian troubles in Italy and France).

Nor was England any the more prone to *schism*—to secession from the Holy See. Had this been the case it would have seized its unique opportunity during the

¹ On the accession of Edward II. (1307), Archbishop Robert's return to office was requested by the King himself.

² Cf. Card. Gasquet's chapter on "The Two Jurisdictions" in *The Eve of the Reformation*, and his analysis of Chrystopher St. Germain's *Dyalogues* on Church and State.

great Western schism that followed so closely upon Edward III.'s "anti-papal" legislation. There were then rival claimants to the chair of Peter, and what could have been simpler than to deny allegiance to the two—to the three—Pontiffs? But *de facto* it did not occur to royalty that an Archbishop of Canterbury could enter on his office before he had been vested in a pallium from Rome—nay, not before he had set forth to quest it in person and tender his allegiance to Peter's successor.¹

We shall be the more strengthened in our conviction if we listen to Henry VIII.'s ambassador at Rome, as he presents his sovereign's book against Luther to Leo X. in public consistory. Luther had declared war, said he, "not only against your Holiness but against your *office*; against the ecclesiastical hierarchy, against this See, and against that Rock established by God Himself." England "had never been behind other nations in the worship of God and the Christian faith, and in obedience to the Roman Church."² Nor was this a mere complimentary utterance, for as late as 1534, in a list of books prohibited by the King, we find a translation of a German attack on the papacy (English by Miles Coverdale, under the title "Of the Olde God and the New").

We may consequently infer that with all the increase of royal prestige from the days of Edward I., contemporaneously with the accession of the people to share in the governance of the realm, the country did not become more "anti-papal." It may have expressed itself strongly at times as "anti-French" or "anti-Italian," but this is beside the point—mere healthy

¹ Cf. in D. Baxter's *England's Cardinals* the "unique Appendix showing the continuous reception of the Sacred Pallium by all the Archbishops of Canterbury and Westminster" (Burns & Oates).

² This parchment codex is still to be seen exhibited in the Vatican library (*Cod. Vat., 3731) beside Henry VIII.'s love letters to Anne Boleyn.

patriotism, a sparring for "St. George and Merrie England!"¹

There was little in this country even of that systematic endeavour of French legists after St. Louis' day in the "Parliament," and of French theologians at the Sorbonne, to conjure up partly supposititious "Gallican liberties." Hence the principle enunciated by St. Thomas in his *Summa* shortly before St. Louis died²—and probably enough stated publicly in his Paris University lectures—held equally good on both sides of the Channel, namely, that the Pope "habet curam universalis Ecclesiæ," and he goes on to speak of "res Ecclesiasticae, super quas habet plenitudinem potestatis." Of what value this principle was for widening men's outlook and furthering the interests of Christendom as a whole, the next chapter may help to show.

¹ From the thirteenth century till the Reformation the English (as also the French and Germans) were partly justified in resenting the financial exactions of the Roman Curia. But it should not be forgotten that only with funds from outside Italy could the Popes protect Europe from the Turks.

² *Summa Theologica*, II., ii. 89, 9, 3

CHAPTER VI.

THE CHURCH, THE PEOPLE, AND THE NATIONS.

WE have so far considered the genteel side of thirteenth century society ; but the good folk of the humbler sort—artisans, serfs, slaves—as well as the helpless, call for inclusion in our picture, firstly because they have been the solicitude of the Church through the ages, and, secondly, because the realisation by state authority of its obligations to respect and tend the least of its subjects was now growing apace, and was destined to prove a touchstone of the civilisation attained by any modern nation.

The beginnings of guild life in the “ Dark Ages ” and earlier have already been referred to.¹ The ultimate sources for Italy were most probably Roman, as also for Southern Gaul ; while for the north, and for England, Germanic rudimentary organisations, Frankish and Saxon, may well have been initial factors. These associations developed as the new nations prospered, being greatly assisted by the Christian spirit. “ Socialistic they were, but their socialism, so far from being adverse to religion, as the socialism of to-day is generally considered to be, was transfused and directed by a deeply religious spirit, carried out into the duties of life, and manifesting itself in practical charities of every kind ” (Cardinal Gasquet, *Eve of Reformation*, p. 339).

¹ See the close of Part II., Chapter V.

By the thirteenth century the guilds had reached a high degree of importance. Besides all the charity of tending the sick, burying the dead members, and providing Masses to be said for their souls, the efficiency of the guilds was already beginning to testify itself for all time—(a) *in the cathedrals*, to the perfecting of which all trade guilds ministered of their best¹; and (b) *in literature* by the composition and performance of those mystery and miracle plays, wherein the ideal and the homely are so charmingly blent, and wherein our modern drama found its birth.²

Apart from the bond of family and citizen life, which made for a homely social spirit, there was no wider outlook save those involved by the noblest of objects, God and one's country. There is in our day—apart from the excessive internationalism of communists—but little left of those nobler bonds of brotherhood. They tend to revive in days of dire

¹ We can refer the reader, without serious anachronism, to the account books of Milan cathedral, still preserved in full detail from its first beginnings (in 1387) to the present day. Rich and poor contributed, as also the clergy, and Sunday collections were made in churches and at the gates of the city. Many sold their valuables, and from 17th of September to 30th of October, we find coming in succession to do "a day's labour for nothing," and make an offering besides—the armourers of the city, the drapers, the braidiers, the shoemakers, the embroiderers (*magistri a rama*), the grocers, and mercers. Then the butchers, bakers, smiths (in gold and silver); also the Humiliati monks and their labourers; while on October 23rd the inhabitants of the Vercelli gate came to "labour for nothing" and made an offering of £632 11s. 1d. On the 29th came the blacksmiths, and on the next day the notaries, the Podesta and all his court, college of advocates, etc. After a year or two we find a canal being carried round the city and a new dock dug to facilitate transport of stone from quarries on the Lago Maggiore. Could any work be more proper to ennoble high and low, ignorant and taught, and so bring all to a level where hands and hearts could meet? This, indeed, was social work (cf. Bishop, *Liturgica Historica*, pp. 411-421, 1918). In a like spirit were our English cathedrals reared.

² Cf. *The Dawn of English Drama*, by R. Kirwan, 1920. For guilds (in theory), see *The State Guild*, by G. R. Stirling Taylor, 1920; and for guilds (in practice) see *Parish Guilds of Mediæval England*, by H. F. Westlake, 1920.

distress ; but for the old-time guild we have no substitute save co-operative and mutual aid societies, which mostly ignore completely the religious rights and duties of men, and those vast trade unions, whose assistance, when forthcoming, lacks besides even the human touch of personal interest.

We are far from seeking to idealise the Middle Ages ; we do not even portray them for their own sake ; but we venture to suggest that a comparison with the present shows that the healthy spirit of development so patent in every walk of life during our thirteenth century has not evolved proportionately in those that followed. The study of middle and lower classes we are proceeding with surely bears this out.

In those days millionaires would have been impossibilities, and the benefit they confer on society still needs to be demonstrated. Then, for the middle class, skill and perseverance were more important than capital. Moreover, " the Middle Ages had no knowledge of any class of what may be called permanent wage-labourers. There was no working class in our modern sense ; if by that is meant a class the greater portion of which never rises. In the fourteenth century a few years of steady work meant, in most cases, that a workman was able to set up as a master craftsman. . . . There was no such gulf between master and man as exists in our days. . . . The man could earn fully half as much as his master. . . . Consumer and producer stood in close relation." ¹

Passing from the poor to the poorest, we find few indeed who are absolutely without liberty—slaves ; and even less who are absolutely without goods—victims of stark poverty. From the close of the Roman Empire, as stated in our study of the fourth century, the slave was becoming transformed into a

¹ Gasquet, *Eve of Reformation*, pp 339-340.

serf, that is, he was taking the first step towards becoming a freeman. "That he is chained to the soil is at the beginning as much of an advantage as it is later a disadvantage, for it secures him a home and certain limited rights of property, none of which can be taken away from him. Large was the number of emancipations by charters which gave religious reasons for the act" . . . ; the modes of tenure of land gradually changed from vague and general personal service to limited obligations, and these changed to "payment of rent, sometimes in produce and then, finally, in many places in money." The process of emancipation was well under way in our century, since "in Italy serfdom had disappeared as early, probably, as the end of the fourteenth century. In England the same result was reached, with some exceptions, by the beginning of the sixteenth,"¹ i.e. while England was still popish.

But while slavery became almost a thing extinct in Christendom, Christian slaves there were yet in great numbers : (a) soldiers reduced to this state by Saracen victories in the Crusades ; and (b) men and women of all ranks for centuries after, as the Mahomedans fought their way well nigh to the centre of Europe ; or (c) travellers seized by Moorish pirates on the Mediterranean. As no martial force could free them, there remained but ransoming to attempt, and heroic souls came forward in their numbers, ready to risk their own liberty and life by approaching a cruel and perfidious foe to barter for Christian slaves. For greater efficiency they banded together in religious orders, and with truly

¹ *Civilisation During the Middle Ages*, by G. B. Adams, pp. 307-310. Domestic slavery was successfully abolished by the Church under the Karolingian emperors in the ninth century. The invasion of the barbarians had nearly ruined for a time the Church's labour of love, captives being often deported in great numbers and suffering slavery of every description. Numerous councils prove that the Church remained undaunted in her purpose to succour the slave and make him a serf if not a free-man. Hence her ultimate success is doubly to be honoured.

gratifying results. For, to consider but the two chief orders, we find that the Trinitarians ransomed, from 1198 to 1787, some 900,000 slaves; while the Order of Mercy, starting from the first years of our century, ransomed between 1218 and 1632 approximately 490,736 Christians.¹

Thus did the realisation of the value of a baptised soul kindle the peoples to heroic generosity. The same persuasion underlies very much of the provision made for the helpless—young, old, and infirm. By the thirteenth century the good work of caring for the babe, the orphan, and the aged, which we have examined at its inception, had developed numberless institutions that dotted the countryside,² and in the towns outnumbered the very churches.

One origin and means of support for such institutions lay in monasteries and canonries of every kind, which almost invariably distributed doles to the poor and provided them with temporary or even permanent shelter. The other source lay in the generosity, the Christian charity of individuals, whether king, noble, or private citizen.

Of regal bounty, St. Louis has already furnished us with a noble example; while Henry III. was not much behind, erecting "houses of charity at Woodstock, Dunwich, and Ospringe, as well as homes for Jews in London and Oxford," rebuilding St. James's leper-house at Westminster, etc.³ But munificence of international importance and consequence had been

¹ Bp. Brownlow, *Lectures on Slavery and Serfdom in Europe*. Delivered at the Torquay Museum. Cf. also Pope Leo XIII.'s Letter on Slavery to the Bishops of Brazil (1888) (*Acta Leonis XIII.*, vol. iii., p. 69 and fol.).

² In the thirteenth century along the high road from Marseilles there was a leper-house every two leagues (De Lallemand, *op. cit.*, iv.). By "leprosy" are to be understood various kinds of serious skin disease besides leprosy proper.

³ *Mediæval Hospitals of England*, by R. M. Clay, p. 73 (1909).

exercised from the beginning of the century by Pope Innocent III. He founded the great hospital of San Spirito, where, as he tells us, "the hungry are fed, the poor are clothed, and the sick are supplied with all necessaries," and whither it was understood the ailing picked up in the streets should be brought. Further, "by official papal encouragement he succeeded in having, during his own pontificate, a number of hospitals established on this model, and these multiplied later till scarcely a city of any importance was without a Holy Ghost hospital."¹

Noblemen and dames were also liberal, particularly as their days drew to a close. We may instance the foundation of hospitals in our thirteenth century by the Countesses of Flanders at Lille, Seclin, Orchies, Comines. At his death Alphonsus, brother of St. Louis, left legacies for twenty hospitals and thirteen leper-houses; while their father, Louis VIII., left one hundred sols apiece to two thousand of these institutions.²

Among English hospital-founders in this century we may mention Ranulf de Glanvill, justiciary of England, and his nephew, Gilbert, Bishop of Rochester; also Michael and William de la Pole.

Episcopal bounty, which later flowed chiefly to educational establishments, gave birth to many a "God's-house" or quite restored them; witness the Bishop of Winchester's rebuilding of St. Thomas's Hospital, Southwark, in 1215; the foundation of hospices in 1245 by Bishop Siegfried at Ratisbon, as also at Augsburg and Mainz; and the perpetual endowment of a hospital for twenty poor invalids at Rheims in 1201 by Archbishop Guillaume.³

The townsfolk also did great things, particularly

¹ Dr. Walshe, *Popes and Science*, p. 250. See also Innoc. III. Epist. xi. 69 and 169.

² Lallemand, *Histoire de la Charité*, vol. iv. Cf. *Cath. Encyclop.* IX., 184.

³ *Histoire de la Charité*, vol. iv.

wealthy merchants and aldermen, doubtless encouraged by the preaching of the clergy through their word and example. Let us instance Gervase and Protase of Southampton, of whom Leland says: "These two Brethren for Goddes sake cause their House to be turnid to an Hospitale for poore Folkes, and endowed it with sum Landes" (about 1185). A long line of generous merchants continues down the centuries till we come to Richard Whittington, who proved himself "the model merchant of the Middle Ages" (died 1423). He founded an almshouse, repaired St. Bartholomew's, and added a refuge for women to St. Thomas's, Southwark, "in truste of a goode mendment."¹

Such examples help us to realise how it was that no state or even municipal taxation was necessary to support the poor and charitable institutions. Voluntary contributions seem to have met all needs, even in the time of such stress as plagues occasioned. There are, it is true, many instances of towns becoming patrons; but there seems to be no instance of systematic taxation of citizens for support of the afflicted until 1255, when the Diet of Worms laid down that in every town of the alliance there should be a God's-house (*domus pacis*) to which all citizens of any means were to contribute one *denarius*. For any similar instance closer home we have to wait till the fifteenth century, when the mayor and corporation of Lille agreed to subsidise a charitable institution.

Tithes, indeed, have some analogy to taxes, but their payment was a religious and not a civil act, both from the motive: sacrificing of one's first-fruits, and from the ultimate purposes to which the money, or produce,

¹ Cf. *The Mediæval Hospitals of England*, pp. 78, 82. In Appendix B of this work the tabulated list of English Hospitals shows some 233 founded in the thirteenth century throughout the country. And the population of England can then have barely been one-sixth of what it is to-day.

was put: one-quarter, namely, going to support the priest, a second to the bishop, a third for church repairs, and a fourth coming to the priest's hands for distribution to the poor. Given, then, zealous priests and bishops, there were fair sums at hand that could help to solve the social problems presented by poverty and infirmity. And that such pastors were not wanting has been shown to sufficiency in these pages, we trust; while laymen, from king to the least 'prentice of a guild, contributed their proportionate quota.

We are aware that this liberality of the Middle Ages has been adversely criticised in many quarters, firstly, as due to the superstitious hope of having sin forgiven thereby; and, secondly, as being indiscriminate and so encouraging the idlers and doing more harm than good. To the first objection we would answer that preachers and Popes in every century have made it be understood that *sorrow* is a *sine qua non* for the forgiveness of sin, and that good works done *after repentance* alone can help to lessen the punishment still due to sin. To the second objection the answer is that though no doubt unworthy individuals not unfrequently received support, still the main stream of this beneficence flowed in the right channel.¹ So great were the afflictions during many centuries—from the first inroads of the barbarians down to the Hundred Years' War and Turkish ascendancy in the East—that there could hardly be too much of generosity. As to the monasteries, it is illogical to accuse the religious of doing harm by indiscriminate alms, and in the same breath accuse them of cruelly exploiting their tenants.

¹ In practice *discriminating* charity is still an unsolved problem. Cf. the *Majority Report of Royal Commission on the Poor Law* (1909): "The doles fell to many of the unjust and to some of the just. They came to drinking and immoral people . . . to the lazy and disreputable . . . to steady and well-doing people, and to thriving families."

In later centuries, as we approach our own, excessive individualism in nations as well as in the least citizen developed in strict proportion with the waning of the broad Catholic outlook. The poor tended to be forgotten, as is all too clearly proved by the state legislation and poor law taxation that became imperative. The cold charity flowing from these new sources may prove sufficient materially, but whether the moral effect on either donor or recipient be comparable to that of the liberality practised in the Middle Ages, let the reader decide.

Of late years the subject of *destitution* has been closely studied. The Minority and Majority Reports of the English Royal Commission, instituted in 1905, were published in 1909, i.e. after four years' investigations. The root principle of the former is: "Prevent destitution from appearing if you can; prevent it from growing and spreading; and see, therefore, that there are no destitute persons to present themselves (for assistance)." ¹ There is a sound Christian spirit in this scheme.² But what shall we say of the Majority Report, whose root principle is: "Provide for the destitute, when by the fact of their destitution they are obliged to present themselves to the destitution authorities, and make the assistance afforded deterrent in character." We cannot refrain from contrasting it with the invitation of Theodore Studite (quoted on page 86 in the last chapter of Part II.): "Good friends who pass on the way, enter here without shame, for this dwelling is the House of God."

In the Middle Ages the Brotherhood relating Christians to each other was certainly more fully grasped,

¹ *Primer of Social Science*, p. 244, by Mgr. H. Parkinson.

² Cf. the essay of B. W. Devas, "The Minority Report and Catholics" in *Destitution and Suggested Remedies* (London, King, 1911). The Majority Report is defended with some success in the same manual of the Catholic Social Guild, as we must admit.

not only in the daily life of the citizen, but also in the broader national outlook, and in the yet broader outlook of all Christendom. And this was to no little extent due to the papacy as vital centre of at least all the West, as is well brought out in a remarkable book of the thirteenth-century French lawyer, Pierre Dubois, entitled, *De Recuperatione Terræ Sanctæ*.¹

Pierre Dubois was a native of Normandy. He heard St. Thomas lecture at Paris, and in 1300 brought out his *De Abbreviatione Guerrarum ac Litium Regni Francorum*. For such a work he must have carefully studied not only French history, but also that of circumjacent lands. For this reason his subsequent book, *De Recuperatione Terræ Sanctæ*, the first draft of which was dedicated to Edward I.² about the year 1306, claims the more careful consideration. Assuming the liberation of the Holy Land, of which there were then still hopes, he proceeds to explain a project for the "International Colonisation of Palestine." Prospective colonists are to come from the Catholic West of Europe, and for the purpose boys and girls should be specially educated from their fourth (or at latest sixth) year. To this end international funds are to be raised, mostly from those of Knights Templars and Hospitalers,³ whose *raison d'être* would lapse when Palestine would have been reconquered. All the children would learn Latin, and some Greek, others Arabic, etc.

In this far-seeing study Dubois also advocates what is substantially an International Court of Arbitration under the high suzerainty of the King of France for the nations of Western Christendom. This will make

¹ Edited by Ch. Langlois (Picard, 1891, 4 fr.).

² Edward was then at the height of his prosperity, and there was talk of his undertaking a further Crusade.

³ It will be remembered that Philip IV. was bent on obtaining the suppression of the Templars, as he coveted their property, and did succeed, some years after, at the Council of Vienne (1311).

for perpetual peace and the betterment of the world.¹ Prelates are to be included, so that on stern occasions they could obtain "by apostolic authority of the holy council" the doom of excommunication against the offending party or country.

This adumbration of a "League of Nations" is justly considered remarkable, and that it was suggested by the international character of the papal court can hardly be doubted, the jurisdiction of which, be it also noted, Dubois recognised so signally as to find in its anathemas the *dernier ressort* for averting the plague of war.

The papacy, therefore, living force as it had proved in training up the West from barbarism and in stemming the tide of Islam, was still held by kings and peoples as compatible with progress, and was even proving a "Mirror for Magistrates."

¹ "If the treaty of universal peace in the prescribed manner has been agreed upon, it shall be ordained by the Council of Prelates and Princes that all prelates of whatsoever rank and all secular soldiers, according to their ranks, shall swear solemnly that they, to the utmost of their strength, will preserve determinedly the treaty and carry out the penalties for the breach of the same."

M. Langlois claims that Roger Bacon himself "had not that appetite of reforms, that fierce love of progress, that width of horizon," which characterised Dubois.

PART IV.
PAST AND PRESENT.

CHAPTER I.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PRESENT STATE OF CHRISTENDOM.

SINCE the days when Plato and Aristotle worked out their deep and many-sided philosophies and developed more or less ideal schemes of government (Aristotle sketching, it would seem, nearly one hundred and sixty) well-nigh twenty-five centuries have elapsed. And since Christianity dawned upon the world with its still wider hope and higher outlook twenty centuries have passed. Both the philosophy of the pagan and the theology of the Christian have expressly aimed at effecting the good of the human race, at making men happy and perfect. But what has been their success through the centuries, and what vital and beneficial forces are they to-day?

Our study of three striking periods, fairly spaced along these twenty-five centuries—the ages of Augustus, of Theodosius, and the thirteenth century—has already supplied us with a partial answer to this momentous question. We have witnessed the battle royal of Christianity and paganism in the fourth century, when the clash of the intellect distinctly predominated over the clash of arms—and paganism succumbed. We had previously learnt to know the pagan *milieu* into which Christianity was born, and could rightly conclude that the triumph of the faith was a famous victory.

Still, in spite of our examination of Christianity at that time and later, this conclusion will possibly be

challenged as gratuitous, and generally our attempt to read aright the whole course of history in Western Europe from the study of but a few generations, may seem unscientific and foolhardy. We believe the following two considerations will make it sufficiently clear that our proceeding is not unreasonable.

(1) The centuries have succeeded each other quietly, and if we may use the term, organically—*sensim sine sensu, natura non saltat*; the centuries have been woven in the loom of time systematically, and though occasionally the woof may have become tangled, though the pattern may have become discoloured or somewhat distorted, still a study of the material with a magnifying glass at but a few places will reveal its general texture accurately.

(2) Real progress and development in human thought, and consequently in reasoned human actions, is in point of fact remarkably slow. This is well illustrated in the recent scholarly work of Professor Lynn Thorndike,¹ of the Western Reserve University, U.S.A. After devoting two volumes to tracing the history of magic and experimental science precisely during the period from Augustus to the thirteenth century, and setting forth "for comparison the mature, carefully considered thoughts on certain topics of a number of the world's intellectual leaders through centuries," his conclusion is :—

"We have seen the same old ideas continually recurring, new ideas appearing with exceeding slowness. . . . Even the most intellectual men seem to have a limited number of ideas, just as humanity has a limited number of domesticated animals. Not only is man unable by taking thought to add one cubit to his stature, he usually fails equally to add one idea to

¹ *A History of Magic and Experimental Science during the First Thirteen Centuries of Our Era*, II. Vol., 8vo (Macmillan Co., New York, 1923).

humanity's small collection. Often men seem to be repeating the ideas like parrots. And this is not merely patristic, or scholastic ; it is everlastingly human " (Vol. II., p. 983).

If the evolution of thought is slow, the evolution of society and institutions is at least equally so ; and for the penetration of so refined principles as those of Christianity, of Catholicism, into the stress and strain of ordinary life and in all its walks, time must be allowed, and time, centuries, have been taken. Hence our study of three notable periods, our historical triptych, may not unreasonably be considered to have sufficient graphical colouring, and to have filmed Christianity and its foes at such passes, as to reveal the essentials of its mode of influencing thought and society and institutions. And besides these three pictures, the *present age* lies before us as a vast panorama in which all who will may gaze.

Having said so much, we may—without undue tremor—broach the great questions : " What has Christianity ultimately achieved ? Has it been a failure ? Has it been a partial failure ? Has it been a complete success ? And if it has not been a complete success, is it to be held responsible ? "

Treating the subject first in its broadest outline, we may, without fear of contradiction, say two things. Christianity did elevate men's minds to a higher spiritual level, to an idealism that was ennobling and that influenced society to the good. In short, Christianity spelt progress. On the other hand, Christianity has clearly not had the complete, the sweeping success of converting the whole world, nay, not even of converting all Europe, though it has been twenty centuries at work. Taken in this sense, the success of Christianity has not altogether put Saint Augustine's *City of God* out of date : the city of God has still a city of worldliness and of the worldly in arms against

it ; many citizens have deserted this city of God, or even sought to betray it. But does it therefore follow that the religion of Christ has proved a partial or complete failure ?

There are few historians who would assert it was quite a failure, though enough will be found who, while admitting that the faith has done good religious and civil service in its day, pronounce that now we must shuffle off what is after all only a mortal coil, and don the imperishable garb of modernism and materialism, graced perhaps with a fringe of pantheism or pan-Christism.

Thinkers who are so minded must, however, admit that positive or orthodox Christianity is to this day a vital force, and that even by itself the one Catholic Church, with the Pope at its head, is a power in the intellectual, moral, political, and social world. Napoleon and Bismarck found it was a force to be reckoned with in the last century, and all governments of note are making the same experience in our own. And this because the Church Catholic has definite principles for the good ordering of the whole moral life of man, and because a host of followers—practically half the Christian world—hold her sacred. Her new legal Code is proof evident that she can cope with the exigencies of modern life and administration. The probabilities that modernism will produce so practical an ordering of public morality and religious observance, and, above all, so coherent and widely accepted a system of thought as that which underlies the Code, seem slight indeed.

Other thinkers of a less radical type still cherish the hope that all Christians will ultimately unite, with a maximum of principles sacrificed and a minimum of religious and moral tenets remaining. But they fail to show how a healthy, vital, organic whole could thereby be achieved. *Quot capita, tot sensus*—all men are somewhat inclined to differ in opinion. The word

discipline falls jarringly on the modern ear, yet the most placid and peaceful association will hardly work at all efficiently unless it have some firm and systematic guidance. And this applies equally to the individual in his own personality. Something, we must assert, is needed to guide his mind and will lest they run riot : for his intellect, some definite philosophic principles as to mind and matter, and for his idealistic cravings some definite creed with the hope of blissful immortality. But let the creed be such as to refine and arrest his intellect by its revelations, and to win the entire adhesion of his will. Once these fundamentals are accepted, he is free to take the initiative and investigate the things in the heavens above and on the earth below to the best of his ability.

The wise man can consequently be likened to a planet which, while following its own particular course, its own wide sweep through space, still acknowledges a centre of attraction and gains stability and lustre from adhering to a system. On the other hand, the absolute free-lance, the free-thinker, the lawless one, is far more like the sudden momentary shooting-star or erratic comet, whose end is destruction.

So much for Christianity and the individual, who is the unit of society, and who is not only the subject governed, but should, in most cases, contribute to society by founding a family, and be ready to play his small part in civil governance. But discipline and a steady external ruling¹ are equally necessary for the formation and preservation of a Christian body-politic—Where are they to be found? Our study of the age of Theodosius and of the thirteenth century, and a glance at the present, point out the Catholic Church, with the Pope at its head, as the only form of Christianity true

¹ This *ruling*, as it relates to the moral and religious rights and duties of men, is of course compatible with any legitimate form of state governance.

to itself through the centuries, strong principled, and spread throughout the world.

Consequently the question : " Has Christianity been a complete success or a partial failure ? " needs restating if we are to reach any definite answer at all. Has the *Church Catholic* been a complete success or a partial failure, and in this second case, is it responsible therefor ? By the Church Catholic we mean the Church of the Nicene and Constantinopolitan creeds, the Church of Theodosius and St. Ambrose, the Church of Edward I. and St. Louis. And what we seek to establish is whether this Church has achieved all that could legitimately be expected of her through the centuries, or whether she is herself responsible for the scandals, the set-backs, and the schisms whereby millions have found themselves, wilfully or otherwise, alienated from at least outward communion with her. We shall deal with the second problem first, and review briefly in conclusion what the Church has achieved, comparing this with what the modern world needs and can legitimately demand for its highest mental enlightenment and moral perfection.

On the strength of our studies on the age of Theodosius and on the thirteenth century, we hope to obtain a hearing as we try, in the first place, to conclude where this responsibility for the imperfect state of Christendom lay in the Middle Ages. And as the present builds on the past, we may possibly find here, too, the key to account for the scattering of Christian energy in more modern centuries.

That the Middle Ages were not " Dark Ages " (except in some sense the ninth century) is gradually becoming recognised, but obviously by no means everything therein was gold. Did the cause of this lie in Catholicism ? We think other reasons can be advanced that adequately account for the manifold shortcomings of Christians, for the baronial warrings and cruelties, for

the martial feuds even of the clergy, and for the idle superstition among the common folk.

In the first place, one property of human nature will in every century account for many shortcomings. Man has his free-will, and finds it irksome always to act on principle, even though it be a high moral principle whose importance he quite admits. He will often follow the line of lesser, if not of least, resistance, and if his fancy, his will, is caught by a present tangible good, he is apt to prefer this to spiritual or abstract values and goods. The difficulty has been realised by Christianity in general from the beginning, and in particular Catholicism has worked out systems of self-discipline, which have enabled men of good-will the world over to steady and ennoble their souls, their thoughts, and actions. These principles we have seen enunciated and worked out by St. Ambrose in his *De Officiis*; while in the thirteenth century they obtained their most perfect exposition in the *Summa Theologica* of St. Thomas Aquinas, in the *Secunda*, on man's mental faculties and on Virtues and Vices.¹ Hence it must be admitted that the Church has endeavoured to meet and to surmount the weakness, now innate in humanity, which leads men to prefer in given instances what is pleasant, present, and tangible, to that which is nobler, but austere and spiritual.

Turning now to the more particular causes that may have hampered the Church in the Middle Ages from attaining full expansion and perfection, we easily discern at least three: remnants of pagan state supremacy, the superstitions that flooded the West through the invasion of the Barbarians, and feudalism, for which the Teutons are also mainly responsible. We shall treat of these three causes in succession.

¹ This golden treatise is now within reach of the ordinary reader in the eminently readable translation of the Dominican Fathers: *The Summa of St. Thomas in English Translation*, Part II., 9 vols., 1914-1922 (Burns, Oates & Washbourne, London).

(a) REMNANTS OF ROMAN PAGANISM.

In Augustus supreme temporal and spiritual jurisdiction were united. He had not rested content till he had made his person doubly inviolable by becoming Pontifex Maximus. Then the Eastern ideas of regal divinity, to which Alexander had already pandered, were popularised in the West. As we have seen, in the provinces altars were erected to Augustus; and he and his imperial successors were divinised after death. Domitian would be a god even before, and ordered that he be ever addressed as "My Lord and God" when spoken to, and the same formula was to be used in letters (Suetonius, *Domitian*, 13). Once the Church triumphed under Constantine, emperors recognised their mere humanity; and the title of Pontifex Maximus passed very fittingly to the Popes. With the distinct dual rule in the Empire as we saw it in the time of St. Ambrose, the spiritual and religious governance devolved entirely on the Pope and his hierarchy, and this was gradually sanctioned by law, Roman civil law and canon law conspiring harmoniously. This understanding was continued in the West in the capitularies of Charlemain, though already somewhat high-handed measures were taken in things ecclesiastical by Charles Martel and Charlemain himself.

In the East, however, the pagan principles of state supremacy asserted themselves much more strongly, and were to be mainly responsible for the great Eastern Schism, that calamitous cleavage of the Christian peoples. We have seen how in the fourth century a second Rome was founded in Constantinople, whereby political government was more and more decentralised, and emperors of East and West arose. Those of the East considered themselves the equals of their Western brothers, and as there was in Constantinople no Pope but only a Patriarch, the Eastern Emperor and his

legists were naturally the more inclined to deal high-handedly with the Church.

This tendency further increased as the Western Empire collapsed before flood after flood of Goths, Visigoths, and Lombards. From the time of Gregory the Great spiritual independence tried to assert itself in Constantinople, though before and after (when heresies arose) the East was glad enough when Rome stepped in in Peter's name to "confirm the brethren" (Luke xxii. 32), viz. against Nestorians, Monophysites, and Iconoclasts. Still, state interference was the main cause of the rupture. This was the case in the transient schism of Photius: when the government arrogated the right to depose the lawful Patriarch Ignatius. The final rupture in the eleventh century was, indeed, forced upon Christendom by the Patriarch Michael Cerularius, but he had begun his career as a statesman, and it was said that if a plot for the deposition of the Emperor Michel IV. had succeeded, "Cerularius himself would have become Emperor. . . . The attack on the Latins made by the Patriarch was so wanton, so entirely unprovoked, and so especially ill-timed in the interests of the Empire, that there can be only one explanation of it. He must have belonged to the extreme wing of the anti-papal party at Constantinople—the party left by Photius." ¹

Consequently Rome has not to bear the responsibility for the schism, nor consequently for its fatal results, which can hardly be over-estimated. The schism accounts for the failure of the Crusades, for the fall of Constantinople in 1453, as also for the presence of the Turk in Europe to this day. It accounts for the cooling of charity and the waning of faith in the souls of many for centuries, and for the total loss of the *spirit of missionary zeal* in the Eastern Church—that

¹ A. Fortescue, *The Orthodox Eastern Church*, p. 177.

essential feature of Christ's Church that was commanded to teach all nations. For eight hundred years the East has kept aloof. But now, as we write, there ring in our ears the words of Iswolski, the last Procurator of the Holy Synod: "We have reached the conviction that the Christian Church cannot be national; it must rest upon an international authority. Byzantium is no more, and our eyes are turning towards Rome."¹

Pope Pius XI. is now turning his own eyes towards Russia, as Pope Gregory the Great did towards Britain, and is preparing a mission similar to that of St. Augustine.² A Benedictine congregation is to be founded specifically to study Russian language, and manners, and liturgy, and will prepare to found monastic centres of Catholic life in that country, which from Bolshevistic rule may then some day attain to fully Christian rule.

(b) TEUTONIC SUPERSTITIONS.

The second circumstance that hampered Christian progress not a little we find in the relics of paganism among the newly Christianised nations of Europe. Scarcely had the religion of Christ asserted itself definitely over paganism, as we witnessed in the days of Theodosius, when paganism of another type with Germanic and Scandinavian mythologies and superstitions broke in upon the scene; and as the Church's action was all but paralysed for a time thereby, Celtic superstitions had also the more free play.

We have beheld the ruin of paganism, brought about by the uncompromising attitude of Christianity, the which attitude differentiates it immediately from the other creeds and speculative systems of the time. Her apologists had not only refuted but transcended the

¹ Quoted in *Katholische Korrespondenz* (Prague, March, 1924).

² *Open Letter to the Abbot Primate*, March 21st, 1924.

religions of old, and explained with much acumen how false creeds, owing to their element of sound natural religion, served to prepare mankind for Christianity (cf. especially Eusebius and Gregory Nazianzen). But that Christianity was no *evolutionary product* of pagan cults, and borrowed no doctrine from them, is clear—(a) from the hostility of all forms of paganism which instinctively felt the faith was incompatible with them, as it refused all compromise; (b) from modern critical examination of theories of such writers as Loisy, Bousset, and Reitzenstein. Thus Mr. J. G. Machen,¹ after close study of St. Paul's religion, comes to the conclusion "there is therefore no affinity between the Pauline doctrine of salvation and that which is found in the mystery religions. The terminology is strikingly different, and the difference is even greater in the underlying ideas. Paulinism is like the mystery religions in being a religion of redemption, but within the great category of redemptive religions there could be no greater contrast."

Christianity, kept so pure from classical paganism² in its days of struggle for existence, was *a fortiori* able to resist Teutonic paganism. As connecting link between these two phases of the Christian conflict, we have St. Augustine's *City of God*. It was written as a defence of the faith after Rome had been captured by the Goths in 410 (this calamity being laid at the door of the *Christianised Empire*). The author stresses the fact that the Church is the "spiritual Jerusalem" which is to consist of faithful from *every* nation, and these by the guidance of Providence would not be altogether unprepared to accept the Gospel of Christ.³

¹ *Origin of Paul's Religion* (Hodder & Stoughton, 1921).

² As regards *hell*, the Church found adaptable illustrations in the classics, but for *grace* and *heaven* Christianity transcended all the conceptions of paganism.

³ Cf. especially *Civ. Dei.*, xviii., xlvi (Migne, *P.L.*, xli. 610).

The work was extraordinarily popular throughout the Middle Ages.

The task of the Church in Christianising the new peoples may conveniently be studied in its primary and in its secondary aims and objects. The first and *essential* end was to replace the false doctrine by the true, to show the inanity of the Teutonic and Scandinavian mythologies,¹ and to preach the one God and the Saviour Jesus Christ. Secondly, the people had to be weaned from their delight in superstitious practices and from what was not reconcilable with Christianity in their popular festivals. The Church brought her doctrine unscathed through these centuries (the sixth to the tenth), but the hopes of the people to benefit their fields or their cattle, etc., by the old ancestral rites could not so easily be shaken. Their popular festivals (Carneval, May-tree, Christmas-tree of new Spring life, etc.) as nature festivals were partly justifiable, partly superstitious and immoral. They were not religious, but owing to influences of heredity followed *alongside* with the Christianity of the Middle Ages as its shadow. This is the shadow which writers of our day examine too exclusively (e.g. Sir James Frazer and Dr. Rendel Harris). They screen off the light of the faith that was shining all the time, so as to discern the shadowy picture the better. The result is necessarily weird, only rarely scientific (as the explanations of these superstitious practices are mostly hypothetical), and never affords an adequate idea of the whole mentality of European peoples at any given time since they embraced Christianity.

What we have said of Teutonic and Scandinavian mythologies and superstitious practices applies equally

¹ Cf. the calm and judicious method of arguing with the pagans, which Bishop Daniel of Winchester indicated to St. Boniface (in one of the two letters of the Bishop that are extant: Migne, *P.L.*, lxxxix. 703-710).

to the Celtic peoples and their even more romantic folklore. Here, again, the true faith was successfully preached, but only by degrees was the peoples' imagination quite Christianised. In the end, however, sids and elves and cobolds and pyxies were relegated to the nursery, their place being taken by the good and bad angels of sound theology. Thus it comes about that St. Michael is specially honoured in Brittany, Cornwall, Wales, and Germany. At times the Christian spirit was strong enough to transform and infuse wholly new life into old folklore. Thus the origin of the legend of Sir Perceval and the Holy Grail is very probably to be found in the Welsh stories of Merlin and of Peredur (one version of which is preserved in the *Mabinogion*). The legend was developed in connection with the Arthurian cycle in England, France, and Germany, and reached its climax in Wagner's *Parzifal*. Works such as these certainly tended to Christianise the popular mind, but were not in any way officially connected with the Church.

If the folklore died hard, the mythologies and definite acts of false religion were quite overcome by Christianity. This is clear already from the very fact that scholars have to exert themselves to the utmost to reconstitute with any coherency the mythologies of the northern peoples and their sacrificial rites. The *Götterdämmerung* had been very real.¹

¹ There is but one reservation we must make in connection with superstitious practices in the Middle Ages. Astrology, i.e. the study of the influence of the stars on men and on the earth, was considered a branch of natural science, and extraordinary properties were attached to gems. This was not thought to detract from religion much more than our own scientific convictions that sun-spots cause magnetic and other storms on earth, and that radium has marvellous properties. The supposed influence of the stars did not rob man of his free will and lead to fatalism any more than do our scientific convictions of the influence of heredity. Such scientific thinkers as Tycho Brahe and Copernicus took astrology quite seriously. The mistake was merely an exaggerated view of the harmony and correlation of the forces in the universe. As regards *alchemy* and the efforts to transmute metals (particularly into gold) in the Middle

It took the Church but three centuries to conquer classical paganism, and she needed not much longer to get the better of Teutonic and Celtic heathenism. We have seen in St. Ambrose the uncompromising Christian; in St. Bede and St. Boniface we have no less orthodox Christian Anglo-Saxons. St. Wilfrid of York, again, was surely as uncompromising as St. Ambrose.

We may then conclude that, even as in the case of the Eastern Schism the Church Catholic worked conscientiously for corporate unity throughout Christendom, so was she zealous for the purity of the faith in encountering pagan customs that could not be reconciled with Christianity. This training of the northern races absorbed, however, a vast amount of physical and mental and moral energy, and it is therefore no wonder that the fair sciences of peace could not flourish to any great extent in the early Middle Ages. By the ninth century the pagan foe was no more, and the Church seemed free for urging the religious progress of the West, when she realised that she had now among her children an institution that was hampering her seriously. This was none other than the *feudal system*, which constitutes the third impediment to Christian progress we have now to examine.

Ages, they have been ridiculed by the moderns until radium was discovered, and it was found this substance did change itself (into helium) and apparently also influenced other elements. Furthermore, the secret of *changing mercury into gold* has at last been found by Professor Adolf Miethe, director of the photo-chemical laboratory of the technical University of Berlin. He and his assistant, Dr. Stammreich, have this year (1924) succeeded in resolving the atom of quicksilver, and so setting free *gold* in sufficient quantity (in an electric mercury tube) to weigh it and test it analytically. Truly a marvellous feat, but scientifically quite sound. For the atomic weight of mercury is 200.0, while that of gold follows very close upon it with 197.2 (International Atomic Weights, 1910). Lead is somewhat above mercury with 207.1, and we may now entertain reasonable hopes of transmuting lead into gold. Still, this would be, as the new transmutation of mercury to gold certainly is, an extremely costly chemical experiment. But mediæval alchemists now stand exonerated in the eyes of science.

(c) INFLUENCE OF FEUDALISM.

The temporal needs of the Church for the support of the clergy and of churches were usually met in early Christian centuries by contributions of the faithful. They were, in general, divided into four parts. Of these, one went to the bishop's support, and the three others were for the lower clergy, the poor, and the upkeep of the churches respectively. From the sixth century onwards, particularly owing to landed estates made over to the Church in pious legacies, the local clergy came to hold the property or revenue more directly, by what in Roman law was called *precaria* tenure. A further step was taken when the clergy no longer needed to apply individually to the bishop for the right to the income, but received it automatically, as it were, on taking up residence, and being appointed to duties, in a particular church. Once this stage was reached the cleric held a *benefice* strictly so called. Irreproachable in itself, this institution was soon to be modified under the stress of circumstances to the detriment of the spiritual character of the Church.

Roman civil law had itself at this period two institutions called *patrocinium* and *precarium*, the former regulating the personal services of clients as towards their patron, the latter ensuring protection to the small landowner once he had made over his proprietor rights to some more powerful neighbour. The *patrocinium* was found by the Franks to be very like the feudal relations existing among themselves between chief and soldiers (*comitatus*), and so the two systems easily blended together. While being thereby enabled to increase the number of their dependents, the Frankish nobility also adopted into their laws the *precarium* system, whereby they could enlarge their domains by merely promising protection to their new tenant in exchange for his farm.

As the Church had gradually acquired vast possessions by bequest, the *precarium* system was more or less forcibly imposed on her landed property by Charles Martel in the first instance. This prince proposed some noble as tenant, who, on the one hand, recognised the ownership of the Church by a nominal payment or fee, and, on the other, became vassal to the king, and obliged to render service as such. Thus benefice and vassalage were linked together, and this could be no gain for the Church. Secular and religious dignitaries became gradually interrelated in the resulting complex system of feudalism, and worldly cares forced themselves upon the most religious-minded prelates, while by no means religious-minded nobles attained Church dignities. Add to this the insistence of Charles the Great that every church have its own lay *advocatus* (*Capitular*, 783, c. 3), and the fact that by the right of patronage lay founders of churches oft-times nominated, or at least presented, a cleric of their choosing to hold the church, and it becomes easy to realise that even in the most peaceful times such an order of things would prevent churchmen from being ideal bearers of the Word of God to the faithful.

This continental feudalism was forced upon England at the Norman Conquest, reaching its acme in one sense in the year 1213 when King John (very much on the *precarium* principle) made over the kingdom of England (and Ireland?) to Pope Innocent III., to receive them back immediately and hold them as a fief of the Holy See. This was a purely politic and political expedient on the part of John, to ensure to himself the papal protection; and the attitude of English barons, or people, or churchmen against the measure, does not detract a whit from their loyalty to the spiritual jurisdiction of Rome. The situation, however, well illustrates the dangers of the mediæval system.

Given such difficulties, one cannot but admire the

energy of Rome (1) in availing herself untiringly of her spiritual and temporal jurisdiction for centuries to urge the West to send army after army of Crusaders to the help of the sulking East ; and (2) in combating the "secularisation" of benefices—witness Hildebrand in the controversy on Investitures, and Thomas of Canterbury dying for the cause of ecclesiastical immunities. The Church herself and her doctrines are consequently, in all justice, to be exonerated from responsibility for the ills still found in Christendom in the thirteenth century.

(d) STATE-CRAFT : "UNTO CÆSAR THE THINGS
OF GOD."

It remains for us briefly to examine how Christianity has developed since this thirteenth century. There have undoubtedly taken place great, indeed radical, alterations ; there has been not only evolution but also revolution among the children of the Church. Germany, with England in its wake, raised a cry for reform, but in their zeal against administrative abuses of the Church, they overleapt themselves, and not only moulded the administration to their liking, but also rent the garment of Christ, distorted the faith and the sacrifice of the fully Christian centuries, and severed themselves not only politically but also spiritually from Rome and Peter. And this took place but shortly before England was to become a world empire, so that she could only bring to her colonies, to vast North America and Australia, a faith not that of Augustine. All England and Australia, Northern Europe, and nearly half America have, in consequence, abhorred Rome for four centuries. At last the intense dislike is abating to religious indifference, but there is no *rapprochement*, save where the long-stifled faith of these peoples stirs

anew within them, as complete disrapture of the standing system threatens.

Politically, the nations have since the thirteenth century developed a lively patriotic spirit, but at the expense of European united action in any form whatsoever. The Christian spirit has undoubtedly relaxed, else we would not have seen within the first twenty years of our century millions of men praying to Christ for protection and success, and then engaging in a titanic life and death struggle with one another such as the world had never witnessed.

Is the Church Catholic responsible for this trend of events? We have seen how difficult it had become in practice to distinguish clearly between the things of Cæsar and the things of God, owing to feudal modes of land tenure and the unwarranted intrusion of the nobility in ecclesiastical offices. The level of the clergy sank considerably in consequence, though wholesome reform reaction was continually being pressed in some one or other of the Catholic countries. The question of nomination to benefices was solved in the first decades of the sixteenth century for France and England, the former making a Concordat with Rome whereby nomination was granted to the crown; whereas England broke with Rome, and though not appropriating the right (a legal impossibility) of nominating to benefices, began to bestow them all without reference to Rome. In this country besides, as in Germany, the crown laid claim to overlordship in purely spiritual matters as well. This last development in the conception of Christian royalty obviously implied the ruin of Christian unity in faith and administration and in every other respect, and calls for special treatment.

The sixteenth-century Reformation may well have had as its pretext the lowering of the spiritual *niveau* of the clergy as accounted for above; but its cause

lies much further back. It will, like the Greek Schism, be justly found in the Rome of Augustus we have pictured, in the old Roman law as distinct from the Christianised Roman law of Theodosius.

With the revival of learning in the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries, the spirit of old Rome was re-quickened and made a bid for dominion. The Church had by now civilised the new nations sufficiently for them to appreciate the full intellectual charm, the literary perfection of the old Greek and Latin culture, and the effect in many minds was intoxicating. Parallel with a sane Christian revival of all that was fair in classicism,¹ went a movement which either blended Christianity and paganism with consummate bad taste, or rejected Christianity altogether. Pagan Roman law was now extolled, and the state and its ruler reinstated as be-all and end-all. It culminated in principles such as we find in Macchiavelli's *Il Principe*, and royal legists everywhere were not slow to take the cue. It is well known that humanists and men of law joined hands with the Reformers in Germany, and thus was achieved the absolute supremacy of monarchs in all things. Cæsaro-papism, Josephism, and Gallicanism are sprung from the very same principles, and have not furthered the cause of Christianity.

The reformers have been lauded for breaking with Rome on account of her sins, and in truth had they kept her doctrines and avoided her sins, their work had been partly commendable. But unlike the Greek Church, they and their followers and descendants exercised an eclecticism in matters dogmatic that has led to the foundation of between one hundred and two hundred sects. Of these many—like the comets referred to above—have had their day of brilliance and are no more; and there seems no logical reason

¹ Cf. Gasquet, *The Eve of the Reformation*, pp. 14-41.

why the surviving sects, based as they are on the same principles, should not ultimately share the same fate. And of this dispersion of Christian energy none but the Reformers can be the efficient cause. They tried to rub off a deal of rust, but while about it broke the vase that held the precious ointment of the faith.

As a modern object-lesson let us consider the New World. Here we find that while the United States in their free Protestantism enjoy over one hundred sects, the south has kept the Roman faith undefiled and one, and there is no indication even of a tendency to break with Rome in favour of some other form of Christianity. Those who reject Catholicism give up religion altogether, and do not try to originate a new species of Christian faith or opinion.

Besides opposing this "reforming" antinomianism, the Church has had to contend with absolute free thought, with freemasonry that has now been flourishing two centuries. When not atheists, freemasons are deists at best, and their hostility to positive Christianity has chiefly manifested itself by undermining in every way legally possible the authority and institutions of the Catholic Church.

And yet in the face of such opposition, in the face of Napoleon and Bismarck and Combes, the Church has sacrificed no principle of faith ; rather has she achieved moral victories of the highest order. It consequently appears that, in contradistinction to other forms of Christianity, the Catholic Church retains to this day all the potentialities required for efficient and ever-enduring self-governance. When most in need of reform in the sixteenth century, she has availed to reform herself from within by the Council of Trent ; and the very outward persecution endured since, and the confiscations of her property, have contributed to strengthen the spiritual life of those children who remained true to her. In particular her bishops in the

last few generations have throughout the world exhibited an *esprit de corps* and a thorough devotedness to their ecclesiastical ministry closely approximating to that of the earliest Christian centuries. But granted the Church wears a truly systematised aspect, is it not antiquated? Can it be of intellectual and social value to-day? What is its *raison d'être* in our highly developed modern civilisation? We are thus brought to deal with our concluding point, what the Church stands for to-day, for the individual and for the nations.

CHAPTER II.

THE CHURCH AND THE INDIVIDUAL MIND.

ALL attempts at dealing with the Church's situation in the modern world will be fruitless, unless the mutual relations of the Catholic and of the modern spirit be clearly realised from the outset. A number of contrasts with the tendencies of modern thought have lately been formulated with much critical acumen,¹ and these we shall briefly examine.

In the first place, as already hinted, Catholic thought is in a sense static and universal, while modern thought is dynamic and particular, it is in a constant flux "both in itself and in its general view of reality" (p. 56). It is ever denying its convictions of the day before yesterday ; it forgets the golden principle—

This above all : to thine own self be true.

—*Hamlet*, i. 3.

And not only is it Protean-like, but it cherishes contradictory principles simultaneously. While it revels in the study of the particular and contemns the typical, the universal, yet does it gladly set up sweeping unifications in philosophy, seeing matter in all things, or, again, only spirit (dynamism), or, again, positing for both one and the same substratum (monism). Modern thought exaggerates liberty and urges self-realisation, though at the same time its philosophy

¹ E. I. Watkin, *Some Thoughts on Catholic Apologetics*, sec. 13-21 (Herder, London, 1915).

sees in human determinations but one of the many classes of physical phenomena. Conscious and sub-conscious states, and even volition, are determined for the individual by sheer necessity.

Now philosophies live only through their *truth*, and of this golden substance they have mostly but a fragment. To quote an instance: "Comte's Humanity was avowedly and necessarily incomplete. Its completion must involve the recognition of a transcendental element. This element Hegel distinctly contemplated."¹ Materialism and transcendental pantheism have both their share of truth, so the Catholic would be unwise to ban them utterly. They can at least be of use as mutual antidotes,² to help the modern mind recover its equilibrium.

In a recent work, entitled *The Present Conflict of Ideals*,³ Professor R. B. Perry, of Harvard University, examines the course of philosophy from Kant to H. G. Wells, and takes "that which is traditional and established, common to modern European Christendom, as sea-level, to measure the heights and depths of the *variants* in thought" (p. 8). Christianity, however diluted, does indeed tend to keep the philosopher to the *via media*, but Catholicism whole and entire has a far nobler function besides.

We have admitted that Catholicism is in a sense static. If we may be allowed a similitude, we would say: the Church is stationary like the palm-tree planted beside the running waters. These waters are the tide of philosophic thought in the twenty-five centuries we have been reviewing, and they have coursed by in perpetual change. The Church has of herself developed as a most stately palm, not without taking

¹ Wilfrid Ward, *Problems and Persons*,—"The Time-spirit of the Nineteenth Century," p. 36 (Longmans, 1903).

² Cf. Brunetière, *L'Utilisation du Positivisme*.

³ Longmans, 1918.

up into her system what she could adapt of philosophic thought for the better exposition of her dogmas. She tempered the idealism of Plato, and ennobled the teleological principle of Aristotle (the perfection of the individual person or thing), asserting that their aim and ideal are in the mind of God. Later she purified the tide of Neo-platonism and gave us the works of Augustine and systematic treatises on mysticism. Finally, she despised not the stream of acute Arabian thought, and through the great minds of Albert the Great, St. Thomas, and Dante attained a complete synthesis of philosophy and theology, of all human knowledge. Thus the Church blossomed in the thirteenth century, and satisfied the intellectual as well as the religious needs of many of her most cultured children.

The Church has thus taken to herself the *philosophia perennis*, that which was sterling in the philosophies of past centuries, and uses it to explain her dogmatic system. "Every age has its particular tendencies of thought, just as every individual has his particular prejudices, his particular stock of ideas. These tendencies, which compose the *Zeitgeist*, like these individual modes of thought, are based on truth and represent an aspect of the truth; but because our age is no more the whole of human history than the knowledge of the individual mind is the sum total of human knowledge, therefore no one age can perceive all the aspects of truth apprehensible by man. It must of necessity have an unbalanced, a one-sided view. The dogmatic system of the Church completes this one-sidedness by insisting on those aspects of truth which each individual age is apt to overlook, if left to itself."¹ And too often the aspects of truth that *are* caught sight of are themselves but partial glimpses.

¹ E. I. Watkin, *Thoughts on Catholic Apologetics*, p. 103.

This is not only true of revealed dogmas, but also of the truths of natural religion and of philosophy itself. We may rest assured the Church, our mystic palm-tree, has not let the philosophic tide of the last few centuries pass by without taking to herself the few pure drops—all that could be made serviceable to her outward expansion. But on the whole she remains foreign to the transient flood. Her twenty centuries of experience give her a right to stand out in opposition, in contradistinction to the modern tendencies we have enumerated above. Her thought is not vague, but exact and definite; her teaching is absolute and noumenal, not relative and phenomenal; she rejects determinism and teaches free-will; she rejects pantheism of any form in favour of her own clear system, which places a real distinction between matter, mind, grace, and God; she teaches that what is lower in man must be fully controlled by what is higher, and hence is against complete self-realisation of the individual.¹ Her outlook goes beyond the immediate temporal good of men. If she is at times cruel to the body, it is only to be kind to the soul; if she imposes restrictions on the individual, it is for the benefit of his fellows, of society.

Yet a conciliation is by no means unlikely. St. Bernard was alarmed at the intellectualism of Abelard, but St. Thomas reconciled that "modernising" tendency with the faith. Bishops were alarmed at the intellectualism of Lacordaire, but it has rendered eminent services to the faith. In the nineteenth century the Church sent out her heralds to convene the contending schools of thought and dogma to a peace conference. Such heralds were Newman and Lacordaire. Similar heralds will she send forth in our own

¹ The self-realisation the Church does advocate in the face of public opinion is that a man should found a family and bring up numerous children in the fear of God and king. This is a hard saying for those who consider life a pleasure-trip.

century. How will the call be heard? Surely as well, if not better, than was the call made by Newman. For, firstly, the recent war has rudely shown the hollowness of many principles of the time-spirit; it has made many thinkers sadder and wiser. And, secondly, there is a seeking for a philosophy more positive than pantheism or monism, less crude than mere materialism. This has led logically to a revived interest in Thomism and Aristotelianism, and justifies our hopes. On the other hand, the Church has outgrown what was mediæval in Thomism. Even as there is development in her doctrine, so will her philosophy be gradually formulated with greater perfection, and above all be rendered more fully intelligible, illuminating to those who are philosophic foreigners. Indeed, the Catholic neo-scholastic movement has already begun, and this is a step towards the realisation of the great Catholic synthesis of the future, with a wider outlook than that of the thirteenth century, but ever from the same lofty standpoint, the Rock of Peter.

CHAPTER III.

THE CHURCH AND THE NATIONS.¹

BESIDES stabilising the intellect, the Church insists on what our educationalists have too often quite overlooked—the training of the will, of the moral power of the individual. From the first the Church has taught man to respect himself, to respect the child before and after birth, to respect and succour women, and the poor and aged. To the rich, as to the poor, she has spoken fearlessly; even on the steps of the throne she has vindicated the bond of wedlock (though it should cost her the fair realm of England), and thus she has protected the family, the vital unit of society. Here, again, if she imposes a hardship on the individual it is for the common good.

But modern society considers the Church's clear-spoken word on this vital social question as hard a saying as her other logical conclusions drawn from natural and revealed religion. This is due primarily to that most general cause we enunciated as explaining the imperfect state of Christendom: men prefer what is pleasant, present, and tangible to a good that is nobler but austere and spiritual. It is true the world praises the hero who dies for his country, and so sacrifices his all on earth for a noble end; but then the end

¹ The reader will find a few points of this chapter somewhat similarly treated in *The Key to the World's Progress*, by Charles S. Devas (Longmans); but I have worked independently.

is a material, a national, end, one for which even pagans are ready to die. The genteel-immoral Horace could appreciate such a sacrifice :—

“Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori.”

Do but enunciate, on the other hand, so truly Christian and Catholic a principle as that of never sanctioning divorce, and you will find few able or willing to raise their minds so high and give you their adhesion. The modern mind is becoming earth-bound, and as we look into the picture of the present and compare it with our picture of the Augustan age, we are forced to the conclusion that our civilisation is retrograding towards that sheer paganism of twenty centuries ago. That some falling-back has taken place is the open verdict of our law courts, and is writ large on the gates of our multitude of homes for the insane, and of houses of ill-fame.¹ A recent German study, *The Decline and Fall of Western Europe*, has brilliantly described how the great civilisations of the past decayed and passed away, and then sounds the death-knell of the West.² This view is doubtless excessive; it would be nearer the truth to say the status of society has receded from the approximately perfect condition in the thirteenth century to the state of things under Theodosius.³ Of

¹ See Abraham Flexner, *Prostitution in Europe*. This book describes the state of things some twelve years ago. Since the war the ranks of the unholy army have not been thinned.

² Oswald Spengler, *Der Untergang des Abendlandes*, 2 vols. (Munich, 1919-1922).

³ As regards the strictly *economic* aspect of life, I quite agree with Mr. Christopher Dawson that we must go back still further to find a parallel: “Modern society is traversing that critical period of its existence which the Ancient World also went through during the period that preceded the Augustan peace. In both cases the material resources of society have outstripped its moral control. It is the crucial moment in the life of a civilisation—a time when societies and individuals are beset by temptations to violent remedies and excessive hopes, alternating with apathy and despair” (“Catholicism and Economics,” contributed to *Blackfriars*, 1924, p. 89).

course, no comparison squares in every particular, but the following points of resemblance are significant.

The scene of action has indeed widened out. The civilisation that should be Christian is not now confined to the limits of the old Roman Empire, but is spread over the world wherever European languages are spoken. Then as now, the Church had spread beyond the pale of these civilised peoples, and Catholic truth was then as now the possession of roughly a fifth of the population of the known world. Then as now, another fifth were Christian but non-Catholic, then they were mostly Arians, now the corresponding schismatic fifth are distinguished by a variety of names and shades of opinion. "Is my inheritance to me as a speckled bird?" is a complaint Jeremiah might utter again in the name of the Lord (xii. 9).

As in the days of St. Ambrose, state officials are now one-half Christian, one-half free-thinkers. And the battle royal against Government oppression is still continuing. Julian the Apostate sought to overthrow Christianity mostly without ruthless executions, excluding Christians from high positions and crippling Christian education. Our modern free-thinkers adopt precisely the same course. Then, as now, there are thousands in the big cities who never hear as much as the name of Jesus Christ.

And with social morality it fares, we fear, not otherwise. Our generation understands better how to practice immorality and partly arrest the dread consequences. There is, indeed, less to strike the ear and meet the eye than in the unsophisticated days of old, but the war has partly drawn aside the veil of conventional propriety even here, and medical statistics tell their own tale of crime. Half the doctors of Europe do not believe in Christianity, and their advice to their patients is tainted accordingly. Seneca said of old, "*Debiles mergimus*" (we drown weakly babies), but

now measures are taken to anticipate birth altogether ; small families, if any, are the ideal aimed at. The dignity of motherhood, which the codes of Theodosius and Justinian began to protect, is losing the respect it enjoyed in the Middle Ages. Women themselves are eager to fill public positions that make child-bearing in practice a difficulty.

Slavery has, indeed, not reappeared, but the million poor are in effect bound to work for a minimum of remuneration. Where their condition has been bettered, they lack self-restraint and act on the great principle of drawing as much momentary pleasure out of life as may be. They also risk becoming slaves of their own trades unions.

It consequently seems that history is about to repeat itself, and that for lack of moral stamina our western civilisation, as in the fourth century, is on the downgrade to ruin. Can anything check it on its course ? Is there no power on earth that can save it ? It is our belief that there is such a power—the Catholic Church.

That the Church herself would survive the disrapture, we know from Christ's own mouth, but that the West also may yet escape what is probably a deserved doom, we have still some reason to hope. The Roman Empire did, indeed, crash to pieces two hundred years after St. Ambrose died, and we do not doubt that the next two centuries will be critical for the West, nay, for all peoples of European tongue. Already Russia has developed the first undeniable symptoms of the crisis. But Italy itself recovered rapidly at the end of the sixth century after the collapse by measures we may even now adopt to our own saving.

Without help of quite another kind than government legislation the West would not have survived the crisis in the sixth century. And this help came through the hands and through the mental and moral energy of Gregory the Great. He realised " that the

Empire was a broken reed to lean upon, that Rome and Italy must be saved, if at all, by the vigorous and independent action of the powers at home.”¹ To him is due “the shaping of the history of the papacy and of all the West.” Amid his public activity for Church and state, which his learned English biographer has so graphically recounted, he was ever keenly alive to the need all classes had of moral training. Being himself a monk, that is, a specialist in the study of moral values, he had a thorough knowledge of human character, of the passions of the human heart and their remedies.

As a preacher he was extremely popular, and for those whom his clear and practical words could not reach, copies of his sermons and other moral writings soon spread far and wide. His words were carried afar also through Benedictine monks, his chosen spokesmen, and these, indeed, he sent out to many countries, even to our own shores. For centuries his *Pastoral Care* was most widely read. Primarily intended for the pastor of souls, it gives a systematic exposition of what Christian conduct should be in dealing with one’s own passions, and in regard of the peculiar character of others. Alfred the Great had the book translated for the Anglo-Saxon clergy.

Secondly, in his voluminous correspondence with all kinds and conditions of men, St. Gregory inculcated in season and out of season and untiringly the fulness of Christian observance, whether he was addressing emperor or bishop, priest or nun. This attitude characterised and rendered fruitful all his social work, his championing the cause of the man of servile birth, or the right of the soldier to enter religion, etc. “He was one of the best of the papal landlords. During his pontificate the estates increased in value, while at the

¹ F. H. Dudden, *Gregory the Great*, Vol. I., p. 156.

same time the real grievances of the tenants were redressed and their general position was materially improved.”¹

Thirdly, St. Gregory always lived up to the principle that was to him as clear as daylight—that as successor of the See founded by Peter he was vested with the fulness of jurisdiction over all Christians. And as the orthodox were often in danger from heretics (particularly Arians) and from barbarian inroads, he brought them what material assistance his practical and energetic mind could devise. Thus was he able to lay the foundations for that unity of Western Christendom in religion, for that wholesome spread of the arts and sciences to the new nations, and for that impulse to mutual understanding which made the Westerns realise that some bond of brotherhood held them all.

If we would attempt to weld anew the antagonistic, or at least mutually suspicious, nations into some form of a higher unity, none other principles than those acted upon by Gregory the Great have any chance of real success. For each nation needs a corrective in the individual and as a whole. The individual needs public spirit in a far wider sense, he needs a European, a world-embracing spirit—in short, the Catholic spirit. There are times when the individual must overcome his egoism and sacrifice even his goods for the weal of his fellow citizens, of his countrymen. All but the wildest Utopian will admit that every hardship cannot be removed from society. As has been well said: “The social question is not only a question of the just distribution of property, it is also a question of the just distribution of *privation*.”² So too, there are times when a nation must be ready to sacrifice something, or abstain from some easy conquest, for the good of

¹ Dudden in *Encycl. Brit.*, “Gregory I.”

² C. Dawson in *Blackfriars*, 1924, p. 98.

human kind. For instance, to quote Mr. Dawson yet again: "The ideal that would secure at once a high profit for the British investor, and a high standard of life for the British workman, by the scientific exploitation of a vast tropical empire, and which would use the economic strength thus gained to destroy the competition of its weaker rivals, is essentially un-Christian, and shares in many of the objections that a Catholic can bring against the Socialistic state. As Cardinal Dubois, of Paris, recently said, 'L'Etatisme est une hérésie'." ¹

Thus self-control is as necessary in the nation as in the individual, nay, much more so, in so far as the evil a nation can inflict exceeds the power to harm which an individual possesses. And this self-control (essential to the mutual confidence of neighbours) will never be secured unless, within the mental outlook of the one as of the many, an ideal of morality be set that is exalted above the momentary interests of our particular part of this small planet. Such an ideal religion alone provides, raising our thoughts to "other-worldliness." But will any religion really answer the purpose?

As we look back over the last twenty-five centuries we see that Christianity in its broadest sense has not been equal to the task. What we require is that type of Christianity that offers the best guarantees of success, and history shows that Catholicism alone has at all sought to make this social ideal a reality; indeed, no other body of Christians—least of all a national church—has as much as framed the proposition in the past. But quite apart from the argument from history, the impartial and well-informed observer will detect in Catholicism alone those truly effective principles required to train up the individual and the nation to quit themselves in all things worthily.

¹ *Blackfriars*, 1924, p. 212.

As regards the individual, Catholicism brings home to him with unequalled vividness not only the fact of God's existence and of Redemption, but the whole economy of God's relations with him through the touch of grace, that touch of gold which has renovated his very soul, and can render golden his every action. This is no sentimental "sense of the divine," but a habitual life-experience of Catholics wherein the intellect is as active as the other faculties. Further, no model more moving to the will was ever proposed to man than the model Holy Church sets before us to-day, as she did in the days of St. Ambrose, St. Gregory, and St. Louis, namely, the model of Jesus Christ as perfect God and perfect man. As for the practical means, treatises, etc., that Popes, bishops, and monks have used to work out these principles, and made the individual a good parent, an honourable member of his guild, and a good and charitable citizen and devout Christian, we have already supplied sufficient instances.¹ The thirteenth century has shown how they bore fruit. Furthermore, each succeeding age has blessed the Church's efforts by adding many names to the roll of honour of her saints—persons, that is, who were virtuous and self-sacrificing to a heroic degree.

As for training *nations* to a higher outlook than nationalism, the Church alone has the specific. Every Catholic schoolboy knows—the most aboriginal Catholic negro knows—that he has a Holy Father in Rome, and that every other Catholic boy, be he white, black, or red-skinned, has the same Holy Father. This already suffices to evoke a brotherly feeling in the hearts of one and all. The Catholic, as he grows up, gradually learns about saints of every country, and sees the obvious fulfilment of Christ's prayer that his followers

¹ Still we cannot omit to call attention to the social work of St. Antoninus at Florence in the fifteenth century, and to his *Summa Moralís*.

should be one. When abroad to earn an honest livelihood, or to complete his education, he can everywhere find a sympathetic counsellor in the Catholic priest; he will be able to join in the Latin singing and feel he has ever the One Same Friend in the Tabernacle. Nevertheless, he is a true patriot, for he has been trained to respect authority and to be generous and self-sacrificing. Thus is the individual prepared to play his part in the reconstruction of Christendom.

This being attained, the forging of a bond between the various nations at last becomes feasible. But only through the medium of a world-wide organisation that can appraise the legitimate needs of each nation, that knows the relative degree of poverty of the bulk of the population, and that has already gained experience in the past in this noble policy for effecting a general *rapprochement*.¹ The Catholic Church alone can bring forward a record of centuries of effort in this direction; we have already seen something of its fruitfulness in the "Truce of God," and in far-sighted projects like those of Pierre Dubois (see Part II., p. 131) for forming a council of nations, and even for the international colonisation of Palestine. The Catholic Church not only is one world-wide organisation, but ranks already as the first in that the correspondence of the Pope and his various congregations (some 30,000 letters daily) far exceeds that of any king or president. Further, Rome's knowledge of the state of each country is not of the superficial newspaper kind, but is based on the word-of-mouth reports of bishops and priests from every

¹ Besides this world-wide organisation of the clergy, Catholic societies of laymen are also everywhere realising the need of such a *rapprochement*. Striking proof of this is the new *International Handbook of Catholic Organisations* (with an appendix on "Catholic Universities"), edited by Dr. Giuseppe Monti (Rome, 1924), who is director of the International Office of Catholic Organisations. The manual is published in five languages, and is a symbol and an earnest of Catholic co-operation for the peace of the world, and for its ennoblement (cf. *The Month*, July, 1924). The "Pax Romana" Society is also developing and spreading well.

diocese the world over, who have the good of their flock at heart and can put their finger on the real abuses and trace them to their causes.

This unique institution has undergone the fiery test of the last war and has not been found wanting. Rather is its prestige enhanced; and the number of ambassadors at the Vatican has been doubled. The presence of many is of course merely a matter of diplomacy and opportunism, but in the nations they represent a reaction is taking place against the neopaganism and materialism of the day; the need of a stable philosophy, of a religion that is a living reality is being voiced ever more loudly.¹ The previous pages will have helped to show that those demands of our century for the training of mind and will and character, for luminous teaching as to the relation of man to God and to his fellowmen of all nations, can be satisfied solely by the Church of St. Ambrose, of St. Gregory, and of St. Louis; by the One Holy Apostolic Church ruled by the Pope as successor of St. Peter. Let semi-pagan governance give place to fully Christian rule, and the riddle of the universe will be half solved, for it will appear that

“ There’s a Divinity doth shape our ends
Rough-hew them as we will.”

—*Hamlet*.

¹ The Vatican Council of 1869-1870 was, according to the keen-eyed Disraeli (in his novel, *Lothair*), “ a demonstration of power on the part of the Holy Father which no conqueror from Sesostrius to Napoleon has ever equalled.” There is every reason to believe that the resumption of this Council in Rome, at no distant date, will prove an even more striking demonstration. Already in 1870 voices (even Protestant voices) were raised urging a pronouncement on international law by the Council. The time had not yet come, but since then the ground has been prepared for making Vatican propositions at least obtain a hearing. If the League of Nations were leavened with more Catholic principles (which would appeal to the whole moral character of men), its efficiency would doubtless be greater. It has possibly something yet to learn from the “ *Pax Romana* ”.

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GEOGRAPHICAL INDEX.

- ACHAIA, 60.
 Acre, 112.
 Actium, Anthony defeated at, 9.
 — Apollo of Actium, 36.
 Adrianople, battle of, 51.
 Africa, Roman province, 31.
 Alexandria, 53.
 Alps, 57, 58, 68, 71.
 America, 151, 154.
 Anagni, 117.
 Antioch, 53, 69, 80.
 Apollonia, 4.
 Aquileia, 55, 68, 71.
 Aquitaine, 104.
 Arabia, 32.
 Asia, Roman province, 31.
 Augsburg, 127.
 Avignon Captivity, 96.

 BABYLON, 38.
 Bagdad, 43.
 Berlin University, 148 (note).
 Blaye-en-Garonne, 106.
 Bologna, 99.
 Bordeaux, 106.
 Brazil, 126 (note).
 Britain, 51.
 Brittany, 105.
 Byzantium, 42, 144.

 CÆSAREA in Cilicia, 86 (note).
 — in Palestine, 93.
 Callinicum, 69.
 Cambridge, 91.
 Capua, 8.
 Carthage, 29.
 Celius, Mount, 43.
 Ceylon, imports from, 47.
 China, imports from, 47.
 Colchester, 29.
 Colmar, 50.
 Cologne, 29, 59.
 Constantinople, 42, 51, 53, 60, 62,
 80, 142, 143.
 Corinth, 29.
 Crete, 60.
 Ctesiphon, 43.
 Cumæ, 5.

 DALMATIA, 60.
 Danube, 38, 50, 51.
 Dardania, 60.
 Dunwich, 126.
 Dyrrachium, 29.

 ELBE, 32.
 Elephantine, 38.
 Emilia, province in Italy, 48.
 Epirus, 60, 61.
 Evesham, battle of, 110.

 FLANDERS, 107, 114.

 GALLIA Narbonensis, 48.
 Gascony, 106, 107, 112.
 — lost to Edward I., 113.
 Genoa, 94.
 Guienne, 106.

 ILLYRICUM, 60.
 Italy, Mameluks in, 95.

 JERUSALEM, 38, 94.
 Joppa, 93.
 Judea, 32.

 LEWES, battle of, 109.
 Liguria, 48.
 Lille, 128.
 Limousin, 106.

Lombardy, 94.
 Lorraine, 107.
 Lyons, 56.
 — Council of, 94.

MACEDONIA, 60, 61.
 Mainz, 127.
 Marseilles, 126.
 Media, 37.
 Mediterranean, Romans supreme on,
 12.
 — pirates on, 125.
 Milan, *passim* in part II.
 — building of Cathedral, 123.
 Modena, 8.

NAPLES, 95.
 Nazareth, 112.
 Normandy, 105, 106.

ORCHIES, 127.
 Ospringe, 126.
 Oxford, 91.

PALESTINE, 35, 102, 111, 112; in-
 ternational colonisation of, 98,
 131, *see also* Crusades.

Pannonia, 55.
 Paris, 56, 91, 96, 106, 107.
 — as international court of arbitra-
 tion, 96, 107, 131.
 Pavia, 37.
 Périgord, 106.
 Philippi, 29.

RHEIMS, 127.
 Ratisbon, 127.
 Rhine, 50.
 Richmond, earldom of, 105 (note).
 Rimini, 7.
 Rubicon, 7, 8.
 Russia, 144.

SAINT Malo, 105.
 Saintes, 106.
 Scotland, 113.
 Scythia, 37.
 Seclin, 127.
 Sicily, Roman province, 30, 60;
 kingdom of, 95.
 Sirmium, 51.
 Southwark, St. Thomas's Hospital,
 127.
 Stirling, battle of, 114.
 Strassbourg, 43.

TAILLEBOURG, 105.
 Thessalonica Massacre, 69-71.
 Trent, *see* Council of Trent.
 Treves, 48, 64.
 Tunis, 93, 112.

UNITED States, 118, 154.

VENICE, mercanzia, 87; rallies to
 Gregory IX., 94.

WALES in revolt, 113.
 Westminster, 112, 114, 126.
 Woodstock, 126.
 Worms, 128.

GENERAL INDEX.

- ABELARD, 159.
 Abortion, 83, 164.
 Acacius, 85.
 Acholius (Ascholius), 52, 60, 61.
 Adultery, penalised by Augustus, 26.
Advocatus of Charlemain, 150.
 Æneid, 15, 37.
 Agapes, 82.
 Alberic, chronicler, 94.
 Albert the Great, 158.
 Albigenses, 98, 119.
 Alchemy, 147-148 (note).
 Alexander the Great, 142.
 Alexander III., Pope, 117 (note).
 Allemanni, defeated near Colmar, 50;
 at Strassbourg, 43.
 Almsgiving, 129.
 Ambrose, Saint, birth and education,
 48; ordained Bishop, 49; influ-
 ence on Gratian, 51, 54, 55; in-
 fluence on Theodosius, 68-72;
 against Altar and Statue of
 Victory, 55, 65-66; relations with
 Pope Damasus, 55, 58-63; his
 De Officiis Clericorum, 74-76, 80,
 81; his assisting the poor, 55,
 60; condemns Arian bishops,
 55; funeral orations, 49, 56, 72;
 discovers bodies of martyrs, 68;
 De Basilicis tradendis, 68.
 Anne Boleyn, 120 (note).
 Anthony: opposed by Cicero, 7-9;
 defeated and slain at Actium, 9;
 typified by Vergil as Turnus, 37.
 Antoninus, St., 168.
 Apollo and Augustus, 36.
 Apollo of Actium, 36; palatine, 34,
 35.
 Aquinas, *see* Thomas Aquinas.
 Arabian thought, 158.
 Arbitration, international: at Rome,
 96, 169, 170; at Paris, 96, 107,
 131.
 Arianism and Arians, 46, 49, 52, 55,
 59, 67.
 Aristotle, 14; politics, 135; philo-
 sophy, 75, 158, 160.
 Artisans in fourth century, 86-87; in
 thirteenth century, 124; at pre-
 sent, 79, 164, and *see* under
 Guilds.
 Ascholius, *see* Acholius.
 Athanasius appeals to Rome, 62.
 Atticus, 8.
 Atticus of Constantinople, 82.
 Attilius, 65.
 Augustine, his conversion, 54; his
 City of God, 137, 145.
 Augustus, C. Octavius, birth, 4;
 wins his way to Rome when
 elected after the death of Julius,
 5; relations with Cicero, 5-9;
 defeats Anthony, 9; proscription
 lists, 9, 17, 23; made tribune
 and endowed with *tribunicia*
 potestas, 21, 37; named *Augus-*
 tus, 21; becomes *Pontifex Maxi-*
 mus, 34; social reforms, 25-27;
 religious revival, 34-38; colonial
 government, 28-32.
 Auxentius, Bishop of Milan, 49, 59.
 Auxentius, a Gothic Priest, 67.

Avarice spoken against by Ambrose, 76.

BARONS, English, relations with Henry III., 107-110; with Edward I., 111-115.

Barons, French, and St. Louis, 101-102, 106.

Bartholomew's, St., Hospital, 128.

Basil, St., 74; appeals to Rome, 62.

Basilica, refused to Arians, 68.

Benefices, 149; nomination to, 150.

Bernard, St., 159.

Bernardins, Collège des, 99.

Blanche of Castille, 92, 100.

Blasphemy, penalties for, 101.

Bonaventure, Saint, 98.

Boniface VIII., proclaims Jubilee, 116; ill-treated at Anagni, 117.

Branding on the face prohibited, 84.

Brutus, 7, 8.

Bull, papal, 113, 116.

Burnell, Robert, 112.

CÆSAR, Julius, adopts Augustus, 4; his murder, 5; his will, 6; avenged, 23; *Templum Divi Julii*, 36.

Cæsar, C. Octavius, *see* Augustus.

Cæsar, things of God and of C., 142, 151-152.

Caius Gracchus, *see* Gracchi.

Camillus, Roman general, 65.

Captives ransomed, 81, 125, 126.

Cathedral of Milan, 123.

Cathedrals and guilds, 123.

Catholic trinitarian creed, 51-53.

Catholicism and social progress, 161-170; C. and modern thought, 156-160, and *see* institutions.

Catiline, 4.

Cato, 26.

Census in Roman Empire, 31.

Charlemain, 93, 142, 150.

Charles of Anjou, 95.

Charles VIII., 101.

Charter, the Great, 91, 108, 114; zeal of Peckham for, 118 (note).

Charters confirmed, 114.

Child-protection, *see* abortion, infanticide, exposure, institutions.

Chnodomaire, King of Allemanni, 43.
Christmas Day, December 25th, 46.
Christmas-tree, 146.

Chrysostom, St. John, 38, 43, 46, 50, 62.

Church, Catholic, principles, 75, 81; knowledge of present needs, 169, *see also* Papacy, jurisdiction.

Cicero, M. Tullius, 49; relations with Augustus, 5-9; with Anthony, 7-9; the *De Officiis*, 5, 9-12, 26, 75, 84; the Philippics, 6-8; murdered, 8, 17; C. and the colonies, 30.

Civilisation, perils of modern, 163-164; the remedy, 164-169.

Claudius, Emperor, 29.

Cleanthes, 13.

Clement I., Pope, 58.

Clergy, formation of, 74-78.

Code of Theodosius (i.e., of Theod. II.), 71, 82, 84, 85.

Code of Justinian, 84.

Codes of Law and the Fathers, 74.

Codex Juris Canonici (1918), 138.

Collège des Bernardins, 99.

Collegium, for trades and commerce, 87.

Coloniae, 8, 22, 28.

Colonisation of Palestine, 98.

Combes, Emil, 154.

Comitatus, 149.

Comte, Auguste, 157.

Conradin, 95.

Constans, 42, 46.

Constantine, 42, 47, 49, 53, 72.

Constantius, 42.

Constitution, Christian, of States, encyclical of Leo XIII., 41.

Conventus, 30.

Convocation, 113; loses rights, 118.

Corinthians and Rome, 58.

Coverdale, Miles, 120.

Council: of Nicæa, 52, 85; of Constantinople (First), 53; of Aquileia, 55, 60; of Vienne, 131; of Lyons, 105; of Trent, 154.

Councils in Roman provinces, 31.

Countesses of Flanders, 127.

Crucifixion abolished, 84.

Crusades of St. Louis, 97, 106, 111-112,

- Crusade of Edward I., 111-112.
Cura Pastoralis, of Gregory the Great, 165.
 Curia Roman, 91, 121.
Curiales, 87.
- DAMASUS, Pope, 46, 53, 58, 63, 64.
 Dante, on Boniface VIII., 117; at Bologna, 99; the *De Monarchia*, 99.
 Dark Ages, 140.
 Deissmann, 14.
Diaconia, 85.
 Diana, 36.
 Dido, 26.
 Diet of Worms, 128.
Dii indigites (i.e. gods symbolic of natural forces in agriculture and human life), 34, 66.
 Diocese, pagan, 30; christianised, 53.
 Diocletian, 47.
 Divorce, restricted by Augustus, 25; condemned by Catholic Church, 161, 162.
 Dominic, St., 91, 98.
 Dominicans, 98, 99.
 Domitian (Emperor), 142.
 Dubois, Pierre, 131, 132, 169.
 Dynamism, 156.
- ECLECTICISM, dogmatic, 153.
 Eclogue, Messianic (?) of Virgil, 16.
 Economics, 162.
 Education, of boys in fourth century, 86; of intellect and will, 157-160, 166-169; Christian education impeded by Julian Apostate and moderns, 43, 163.
 Edward I., 92, 131; and Simon de Montfort, 108; his crusade, 112; reforms, 112, 113; the Model Parliament, 113; relations with Rome, 116-118.
 Edward III. and Rome, 119, 120.
 Empire, Holy Roman, 93.
 Encyclical "Immortale Dei," 41.
 Epicureans, 75.
 Estienne, Abbot, 99.
 Eugenius, Usurper, 64.
 Eusebius, 145.
 Exposure of children, 82, 83.
- FABIOLA, '85.
 Families, small, 164; large, 159 (note).
Fasti of Ovid, 38.
 Fathers of Church and Codes, 73, 74, the Fathers and property, 75 (note), 81.
 Feudalism, 105, 108 (note), 116 (note), 149-151.
 Francis, Saint, 91.
 Franciscans, 98, 99.
 Frazer, Sir J., 146.
 Frederick II., 93-95, 99.
 Freethinkers and freethought, 139, 154, 163.
- GALLICAN liberties, 121.
Genius of Augustus, 36.
 Gervase, Saint, 68.
 Gervase of Southampton, 128.
 Gilbert of Rochester, 127.
 Gladiatorial combat abolished, 40.
 Gold out of mercury, 148.
 Gospel refuted by Julian Apost., 43.
 Goths, 145.
 Grace, ennobles mind and will, 145, 159, 168.
 Gracchi, Tiberius and Caius, 22, 29.
 Gratian (Emperor), 43, 48, 50-57; measures against idolatry, 63; his murder, 56, 64.
 Gregory of Nazianzen, 49, 61, 145.
 Gregory of Nyssa, 49, 74.
 Gregory the Great, 164-166.
 Gregory IX., 94.
 Grosseteste, 116.
 Guilds, their origin: partly Roman, 87; partly Teutonic, 122; co-operate for Cathedrals, etc., 123.
- HENRY III. and St. Louis, 104-107; and English barons 107-112.
 Henry VIII. against Luther, 120.
 Hercules, statue of, 71.
 Heresy, little in England, 119.
 Hildebrand, Gregory VII., 151.
 Himerus, Bishop, 62 (note), 78.
 Hohenstaufen, 93.
 Holy Ghost, his divinity, 51, 53.
 Horace, 17-19, 36, 37.
 Hospitallers, Knights, 131.
 Hospitals, 126-128.

Hugh de la Marche, 106.
 Hundred Rolls, 112 (note).
 Huns, 50.

IGNATIUS, Patriarch, 62, 143.
 Infanticide, 83, 163.
 Innocent III., hospital work, 127; relations with King John, 150.
 Innocent IV., 95.
 Insanity, recent increase of, 162.
 Institutions, charitable, private: *valetudinaria*, 85; public: deaconries, 85; *basilades*, 86; brephotropium, 86; gerontocomium, 86; orphanotrophium, 86.
 International Arbitration, 96, 107, 131, 132, 169.
 Investitures, controversy of, 151.
 Isis, 13.
 Islam, 132, and see Turk.
 Iswolski, 144.

JANUS, temple of, closed, 20.
 Jerome, St., 52, 76.
 Jesus Christ, 38, 80; His divinity, 52, 53, 163, 169.
 John, St., and the Logos, 46.
 John, King, 95, 150.
 John Chrysostom, see Chrysostom.
 Jovian (Emperor), 43.
 Jubilee Games, see *Ludi Saeculares*.
 Jubilee of 1300 A.D., 116.
 Julian the Apostate, 47, 82; accession, 42; neo-platonist revival, 43; treatment of Christians, 43, 52; death, 43.
 Julius, Pope, 63 (note).
 Jupiter, 13, 18, 33.
 Jurisdiction, papal, 120, 121; of Pope Clement I., 58; of Damasus, 61-63; of Gregory the Great, 116; spiritual, claimed by crown, 117; mixed, 119; see also Roman claims.
Jus Gentium, 29.
 Justina, 50, 54, 59; relations with St. Ambrose, 56, 57, 64-68.
 Juvenal, 7, 83.

KANT, 157.
 Knights Templars, 131.

LACORDAIRE, 159.

Lares, 34.

Lares compitales, 36.

Law, Roman law *versus* Christian, 43, 116, 142, 153; canon law in England, 117 (note); Teutonic laws, 100; law at Bologna, 99; laws of St. Louis, 100-103; laws of Edward I., 112, and see Codes.

League of Nations, 132, 170.

Leland, 128.

Leo III., 93.

Leo XIII., 41.

Lex Papia-Poppæa, 26.

Liberius, Pope, 48.

Liberty, true and false, 139.

Logos of St. John, 46; of the Arians, 46.

Lollards, 119.

Louis VIII., 127.

Louis IX., St., accession, 92; relations with Rome, 94-96; with Henry III., 104-110; with French nobles, 101-103, 105, 106; fiscal and legal reforms, 100, 102, 103; as arbiter, 96, 107; canonised, 116.

Louis XI. and the Pragmatic Sanction, 101 (note).

Lucan dies childless, 27.

Lucretius, 15, 16.

Ludi Saeculares, 36; the last, 40.

Luther, Martin, 117, 120.

MACCHIAVELLI, 153.

Maffeana Tabula, 37.

Magic, 18, 34, 146.

Mameluks in Italy, 95.

Manfred, 95.

Marcellina, 48, 49.

Marius, 29.

Marriage and divorce, 25-27, 161-162.

Martin, St., 49, 68.

Maximus, Cynic, 61, 62.

Maximus, Usurper, 43, 56, 64, 68.

Mercanzia (Italian guild), 87.

Mise of Amiens, 109.

Mithra, Persian Sun-god, 45, 46.

Mithraism, 44, 45, 52.

Modernism, 138, 156.

Monarchy, absolute and limited, 90,

- Mongols, 111.
 Monica, St., 85.
 Monks, promotion to priesthood, 78; directors of charitable institutions, 85-86; emissaries of Gregory the Great, 165; rehabilitate labour, 88.
 Monotheism of Plato and Aristotle, 14, 18.
 Montesquieu, 26.
 Montfort, Simon de, 108-110.
 Morality, under Augustus, 25-27; of the clergy, 76-78; at present time, 163-164.
 Motherhood, dignity of, 164.
 NAPOLEON I., 154.
 Nationalism, excessive, 152; the broader outlook, 130, 168-169.
 Nations, *see* League of Nations.
 Neo-paganism, 162-164, and *see* Paganism.
 Neo-platonism, 14, 18, 44.
 Neo-scholasticism, 160.
 Newman, Cardinal, 159, 160.
 Nicene Creed, 51, 140.
 Nogaret, William of, 117.
 Norman Conquest, effects of, 104, 150.
 ORDERS, religious, new and old, 91, 99.
 Origen, 49.
 Ovid, his *Fasti*, 38; childless, 27.
 PANÆTIUS, 9.
 Pagan statecraft revived in sixteenth century, 151-153.
 Pagan worship gradually suppressed, 43, 55.
 Paganism, revived under Julian, 43; Teutonic paganism, 144-146.
 Papacy, temporal power, 116, 117 (note), 150; papacy and Gregory the Great, 164-166 *see also* suzerainty, Roman claims, jurisdiction.
Parabolani (hospitallers), 85.
 Paris, Matthew, 99, 107.
 Pasté, Marshall Ferri, 101.
 Patriarch of Constantinople, 142.
Patrocinium, 149.
 Paul, St., 14, 46, 83, 145.
 Peace Conference, 131, 159, 169, 170.
 Peckham, John, 118.
 Pelagianism, 72.
 Peter, faith of P. and Damasus, 61, *see also* Roman claims.
 Peter of Alexandria, 53.
 Peter of Brittany, 105.
 Philip Augustus, 104.
 Philip III., 112.
 Philip the Fair, 116, 117, 131.
 Philippics of Cicero, 7-9.
 Philo, 46.
Philosophia perennis, 158.
 Philosophy, neo-platonist synthesis of, 44; Catholic, 158-160; neo-scholastic, 160, modern, 156, *see also* Aristotle, Plato, St. Thomas.
 Photius, 143.
 Pilate, Pontius, 32.
 Pius XI., Pope, 144.
 Placilla, Empress, 85.
 Plantagenets, 106.
 Plato, 14, 87, 135, 158.
 Plays, miracle and mystery, 123.
Pleroma of St. Paul, 46.
 Pliny, the elder and the younger, 27.
 Pneumatomachists, 49.
 Pole, Michael and William de la, 127.
 Pontifex Maximus, title of Augustus, 34, 35; Christian use of term, 38, 142.
 Poor Law, 130.
 Posidonius, 10.
 Poverty relieved, *see* institutions.
 Pragmatic Sanction, 101 (note).
 Priscillian, 70.
 Prostitution, 82, 162.
 Protase, St., 68.
 Protase of Southampton, 128.
 Protestantism, 153, 154.
 Provisions of Oxford, 107-109.
 Prudentius, 69.
 Pulcheria, Empress, 85.
 RADIUM, 148.
 Ramsay, Professor, on Vergil, 16.
 Ranulf de Glanvill, 127.
 Raymond of Toulouse, 106.

- Reformation and Reformers, 117, 120, 153-154.
- Renan, 45.
- Rendel Harris, Professor, 146.
- Republic, Roman, a dying cause, 5; gradually superseded by imperialism, 22-24.
- Richard of Cornwall, 105.
- Robert of Artois, 94.
- Robert of Sorbonne, 98.
- Robert of Winchelsea, 118, 119.
- Rollo, 104.
- Roman claims, of Clement I., 58; of Julius I., 63; of Pope Damasus, 61-63; of Gregory the Great, 166.
- Rufinus, 52.
- Rule, civil: imperialism, 142, 167; absolute and limited monarchy, 90, 111; "divine right" of kings, 101, 117, 153.
- Rule, religious: ritual revival under Augustus, 34-38; pagan priest-hoods, 37; Pontifex Maximus, 34, 35; Christian rule of the mind, 156-160; and will, 141, 166, 168; *see also* institutions, jurisdiction, papacy.
- San Spirito* hospitals, 127.
- Sarmatians, tribe, on Vistula, 51.
- Saturn, 33.
- Satyrus, brother of St. Ambrose, 49.
- Schism, Greek, 53, 142-144; schism in England, 119, 120.
- Secretariat, imperial, divided for East and West, 46.
- Self-discipline, 139, 141.
- Self-realisation, 151.
- Senate, 30; remodelled by Augustus, 24; half-Christian, 55, 69.
- Seneca, L. Ænnæus, 13, 83; dies childless, 27.
- Senones, 65.
- Septuagint, 38.
- Serapis, 13; temple destroyed, 71.
- Sibyl, 35, 36.
- Sibylline oracles, 34, 35.
- Silius Italicus dies childless, 27.
- Simon de Montfort, 108-110.
- Siricius, Pope, 46, 62, 70, 76-78.
- Slavery and slaves, in Augustan age in fourth century, 73, 83-85, *see also* branding, crucifixion, manumission, captives.
- Social question, in Augustan age, 32-33; in time of Theodosius, 79-88; at the present time, 161-170.
- Socialism, 167.
- Socrates, 17.
- Sol Invictus*, feast of, 46.
- Sorbonne, 99.
- Stammreich, Dr., 148 (note).
- Status, Publius P., dies childless 27.
- Stoic morality, 83 (note).
- Stoicism and Cicero, 9.
- Statue and Altar of Victory, 55, 64-67, 69.
- Suetonius, 20 (note) quoted *passim*.
- Superstitions, of Augustan Age, 18, 34; of the Middle Ages, 144-147.
- Supremacy, papal, *see* Roman claims; royal supremacy over Church, 101, 117, 153.
- Suzerainty, papal, 96, 150.
- Symmachus, Quint. A., 64; his vindication of Paganism, *Relatio Symmachi*, 65, 66.
- TACITUS, Cornelius, quoted, 23-24, 31; dies childless, 27.
- Taurobolium, expiatory sacrifice, 44.
- Templars, Knights, 131.
- Tenants, 125, 149, 165.
- Tertullian, 34.
- Theodore Studite, 86, 130.
- Theodosius, 47, 49, 61, 62; in Britain, 51; in the East victorious, 51, 54; baptised, 52, 60; named Augustus, 51; his rule in the West, 68; relations with St. Ambrose, 68-72; the Altar of Victory, 69; the massacre at Thessalonica, 69-71; legal support for Church, 71; his funeral oration, 72.
- Thomas Aquinas, St., 141, 158, 159; relations with St. Louis, 98, 99; on papal jurisdiction, 121; at Paris, 121, 131.
- Thomism, 160.
- Tiberius, 31.

- Tithes, 128, 129, 149.
 Training of intellect, 139, 158-160.
 Training of will, 141, 168.
 Trial by combat, proscribed, 103.
 Tribunes, 21.
Tribunicia potestas, 21.
 Trinitarian Order, 126.
 Truce of God, 103, 105 (note).
 Turk, 95, 121, 143; *and see* Crusades.
 Turnus in the *Æneid*, 37.

 UNIVERSITIES, 91; *and see* Sorbonne,
 Bologna, Paris, New Orders.
 Urban IV., 95.
 Ursacius, 60.
 Ursinus, Antipope, 59, 63.

 VALENS, 43, 46, 51, 52.
 Valentinian I., 43, 50, 59.
 Valentinian II. accession, 50; rela-
 tions with St. Ambrose, 64-68;
 the Statue of Victory, 64-67.

 Varro, Marcus Terentius, 17, 21.
 Vatican library, 120 (note).
 Venus, 16.
 Vergil, Publ. Maro, 14-16, 37, 49;
 the *Æneid*, 15, 37; the
 " Messianic " Eclogue, 16;
 Vesta, 34.
 Vestal Virgins, 35.
 Vettius Prætextatus, his mithraism,
 44; relations with Pope
 Damasus, 59.

 WALLACE at Stirling, 114.
 War, limited as to time and motives,
 105-106; the Great War, 152,
 160, 163; *see also* truce of God,
 peace conference.
 Wells, H. G., 157.
 Whittington, Richard, 128.
 Wicliffe and Wicliffites, 119.
 William the Conqueror, 104, 150.

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